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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

No. MCCXLI. MARCH 1919. Vol. CCV.

FURTHER ADVENTURES OF THE ARMOURED CARS.

PERSIA AND BAKU.

I.

THINGS had been quiet with us in ancient Ecbatana—quiet even to distraction, for communication was bad, and news filtered through slowly.

We had heard vague rumours of the activities of one Kutchik Khan, bandit and patriot, leader of the Junglis,[1] who, whilst voicing noisily and vaguely his belief in "Persia for the Persians," yet made constant raids on the Resht-Menjil road, robbing all and sundry under the guise of patriotism. His methods, appealing to many in these times of Bolshevism, had gained him a certain following; and, incited by the loathsome Hun, this small force had become a great nuisance to us.

Convoys passing to and from Enzeli—the well-known port on the Caspian Sea—were frequently attacked, and with impunity.

It was therefore good news to us, chafing at our enforced idleness, when one day towards the end of July we received orders to strafe the Khan.

On a fine morning we left Hamadan just as the sun was peeping over the snow-clad hills encircling the town, bathing the whole countryside in rose-tinted hues.

The jingle-jangle of camel-bells and the droning chant of their drivers proclaimed the fact that others were astir even at this early hour, and soon the house-tops were alive with people in many stages of *déshabillé* and sleepiness. Bundles of rags unveiled to the joys of another day

[1] From Menjil to Resht stretches a belt of dense jungle, and the inhabitants of this belt have been dubbed by Britishers "Junglis."

the unsightly forms of their owners.

After winding between mud walls, which seemed to accentuate the dust and the stench apparently so necessary to Hamadan, we struck the Kasvin road, and, passing through the first toll-gate, felt we really had started the journey.

This road was built by a Russian engineering company, and had been well maintained during the war. Even at that stage, despite the heavy demands made upon it, it could still be classed as "metalled road 1st class." The perfectly absurd sum we paid the company for the use of the road need not be divulged, especially in these days of millions.

After about a dozen miles or so we were brought to an abrupt stop by a Persian soldier, and in due course a stocky Colonial sergeant came up and took particulars of our convoy before allowing us to proceed. This was the first of many posts, all of which were manned by Persian levies under British officers and N.C.O.'s.

The country through which we passed was far more civilised than anything we had yet seen. Though in places it was hilly, yet no difficult passes were encountered, and a slight downward gradient assisted one enormously — for Kasvin is about 2000 feet lower than Hamadan. Numerous caravanserais and posting-houses were dotted along the road, and the farming was far more scientific than hitherto. Apparently the Russian influence had had some good effect on the effete Persian.

Our journey was much as other journeys. The dust prevented one getting a good idea of the flora and fauna; and our cars had their troubles, as cars always will have; but Vauxhall and Peerless — yes, and even Henry Ford — emerged triumphant. Gazelle darted here and there; birds of wonderful plumage, with names to match, flitted past us, uttering strange calls; the corn wagged its golden ears as we passed.

The remains of dozens of derelict motor-cars of all makes and sizes recalled to us Russia's efforts and her defection, and many "ifs" jumped to our minds. Oh, the tragedy of it all! Broken cars, broken homes, broken men — and broken pledges. However, we shrugged our shoulders and dismissed these questions as hypothetical.

Towards dusk we reached Abi Gāhn, noted for its sulphur springs, and here we decided to spend the night. A few minutes later found us fairly comfortably ensconced in the serai of a Russian posting-house. Those of us who had been in Russia at once began showing our knowledge of that elusive language, and talked Russian to the master and mistress of the house, wheedling out of them such little delicacies as we considered necessary to our bodily comfort. The only fly in the ointment was the non-appearance of the

colonel's (I.M.S.) kit, due apparently to the breakdown of the car it was travelling on. This was unfortunate, especially as, in the Medical Service, medical comforts are occasionally carried!! Still, the colonel was a sport, and between us we soon made him comfortable; and with the moon to light us to bed and the crickets to sing us to sleep, we ignored the persistence of hordes of mosquitoes and slept.

Next morning we were up with the lark—or its Persian equivalent—and after a good breakfast made an early start. The country looked even more civilised than that of the previous day. The valley through which we passed was cultivated to the full, and the crops were good; the habitations were less primitive, and poverty and squalor appeared to be left behind.

We passed certain units of the —— Brigade halted by the roadside, with their black-and-red diamonds showing up on the drab of their topees. As we flung them cheery greetings we little thought that before a month had passed we should be scrapping side by side with them in other lands.

Verst after verst was covered with almost monotonous regularity, until eventually the vineyards and orchards of the environs of Kasvin were reached, and later we passed through the Resht gateway—a triumph of ceramics—into the town itself.

Our glance at Kasvin was destined to be only a very cursory one, for we left early the following morning; but it was quite a relief to find a boulevard of sorts, to see unveiled faces smiling their welcome at us, and to find gardens and cafés once again. Here the Russian and the ubiquitous Armenian gave a touch of Westernism to the Oriental town.

Next day, whilst Kasvin slept, we again passed through the archway of the Resht gate, and were soon well on the way to Menjil, our stopping-place that night. Our road ran through hill country, certain stretches being decidedly pretty, but the sun had scorched and seared all vegetation. On the whole it was rather reminiscent of Northern Armenia, though not nearly so well watered. At this juncture the flinty nature of the road gave us considerable tyre trouble, and our rate of progress decreased. As a result of this we had great difficulty in reaching Menjil by daylight.

The British Tommy describes Menjil in three words. First and foremost, as we saw it, there was a collection of small houses in all degrees of dilapidation, and at the extreme end a hotel of sorts with a name which was most out of place. Around this, each day and the whole day, raged a violent gale, accompanied by clouds of blinding dust, and, at odd times, showers of rain. To stand upright was a physical impossibility. Among the collection of houses, and particularly in the hotel, large numbers of energetic and persistent fleas had congregated, and if the

poor misguided traveller fancied he had stopped there for a night's rest he had a rude, continuous, and effective awakening. Personally I preferred to grapple with the wind and dust, and, though sleep was denied me, I was not surfeited with company. Near by the village a river of rich red mud flung itself resentfully towards the sea, passing under a very fine bridge at the extreme northern end. In charge of Menjil was an officer of the 14th H. He had been there five weeks and was still sane, so he must have had an exceedingly well-balanced mind.

The next stage of the journey was the dangerous part, for we were soon to enter the famous jungle wherein Kutchik Khan and his band of stalwarts successfully hid themselves and fell upon the unwary. Our convoy presented a unique spectacle, the cars simply bristling with machine-guns, and Master Kutchik appeared to be in for a warm time if he tried any monkey tricks. For the first fifteen miles the road ran along the hillside, with a sheer drop on the right-hand side of several hundred feet to the swirling, muddy torrent below. The hills were moderately well wooded, and were dotted with hamlets whose occupants cultivated every available acre with a thrift worthy of mention.

Everywhere derelict cars paid their tribute to the mad stampede of the Russian army from law and order to Bolshevism. Here and there enterprising Jews were attempting salvage, but the Russian soldier, if a simple-minded soul, at least has a shrewd idea as to the value of magnetos or sets of tyres, and consequently practically everything movable had already gone.

At length we reached the toll-gate and Russian post on the fringe of the jungle itself. Here we closed up and got ready for any eventuality, and slowly forged ahead.

The country was magnificent and very hilly, the dense jungle screening the road at its sides like a wall. Flowers of all kinds and hues thrust their brilliance through the dense foliage, and the air was heavy with their scent, accentuated by the damp heat. Giant creepers stretched their tendrils across the road, their scarlet blossom forming a triumphal arch. Passion-flowers, purple clematis, dog-roses, and honeysuckle vied with the semi-ripe pomegranates and oranges in mocking us as we went by; whilst from the jungle came the calls of many wild things, and down below the roar of the swirling waters as they pushed over crags and through the undergrowth. And then we reached a clearing with a small hut in the centre, from which staggered a youthful but fever-stricken British officer who should have been in hospital. In a somewhat shaky hand he held a message just received telling him that Kutchik was making merry on the road outside Resht—our destination that night.

Well, we could not stop there, so decided to go right

for him, and hoped he would give us a show. Cautiously we proceeded, peering behind every leaf, craning our necks first this way and then that, until gradually the jungle began to thin out, and it dawned on us that this time, at any rate, Kutchik had not worked to schedule.

Fed up to the back teeth, we crept into Resht just at dusk, and there we learned from "The Babe" that, a few days previously, Resht had been the scene of bitter fighting, as a result of which the Junglis had fled discomfited, pursued by the bombs of two energetic and relentless airmen, and haunted by memories of diminutive Gurkhas with blood-stained kukris, and armoured cars which played havoc with everything.

The town was entirely in our hands and was heavily patrolled, martial law reigning supreme. On reporting to the Staff we found our orders had been changed, and that we were to go to Baku, which the Turk was endeavouring to take in frantic haste. This promised more excitement, and full of enthusiasm we soon disentangled ourselves from the fever-stricken swamps of Resht, and after a short run through the rice-fields we reached Enzeli, just in time to rush our cars aboard a steamer bound for the Oil City of Russia. A detachment of the N.S. arrived just in time to board the same steamer.

The Caspian was unkind to us on the trip, and raised her angry billows in noisy protest; but, scorning her lack of courtesy, we in due course arrived at Baku after a twenty-hours' trip, to the accompaniment of many syrens. A noisy and cumbersome seaplane, built probably in 1912, made ungraceful circles over our heads.

Once again we were in Russia.

II.

Once moored alongside, we commenced to unload our cars and stores, and dusk was almost on us before we had finished. Then followed a march up to our billets in the town, and to the surprise of many the streets were lined with the populace, assembled to give us a hearty welcome. For some time the air was rent by their cheers, accompanied by the "clack, clack!" of service "nines" on the ill-paved streets.

Personally I must confess I remained unmoved by this demonstration, as I had not forgotten how I entered Russia in 1916, only to be almost booted out in 1917, and counting myself lucky to get out at all.

Besides, if Baku were to be saved, we needed help, not "lip worship," and hundreds who were cheering us should have been in the line themselves, doing their bit.

However, it was good to be

in civilisation again, and our billets at the Hôtel Metropole were splendid. As we marched through the cheering throng, it was not without a certain grim humour that we espied the field-guns of Colonel Petrov's Bolsheviks pointed seawards in anticipation of our arrival. But the Bolshevik was always a cowardly hound, and his bark was far worse than his bite when he was really up against it.

The position on our arrival was as follows: The Turks that very morning had succeeded in breaking through and entering into the outskirts of the town, to the general consternation; but the Armenians and Russians, armed with all kinds of weapons, appearing from everywhere, not only drove them to where they came from, but actually pushed them two miles beyond.

After this the Bolshevik Government was thoroughly discredited and received its *congé;* the Caspian Fleet took charge of affairs under the name of the Centro-Caspian Government. They possessed the biggest guns, and were therefore most capable of enforcing their commands! Their first act had been to extend the invitation we had been waiting months for, and which the Bolsheviks refused us. Had it come months earlier we should have been in every way more ready for it.

For some days we remained in the town, by day doing nothing in particular, by night standing to. Anxious days they were, too. Things were very unsettled, and the Bolshevik element did all they could to make things bad for us, so much did they resent the arrival of the British *bourgeoisie.* The culminating point, however, was reached when two Britishers were arrested by a crowd of Bolsheviks for some alleged injustice to their followers.

The whole of that evening a fight seemed imminent, and the entire populace seemed to go about in a state of armed frenzy. Eventually, however, wiser counsels prevailed, and, as a result of our firm attitude, the Bolsheviks allowed themselves to be disarmed, and were told politely, but forcibly, that if they did not clear out to Astrakhan at once we should give them a bad time. They went with much gnashing of teeth from their chief, Petrov—a clever, plausible old scoundrel.

Thus, in addition to removing a grave menace in our midst, we secured a large quantity of arms and ammunition, of which we were badly in need for the equipment of the Armenians. Several batteries of field-guns also were handed over.

The following day, the town being in a state of absolute tranquillity, the British troops were posted at various parts of the line, with the object of strengthening the Armenian troops already there. In the accomplishment of our aims we were quite unsuccessful, for, on the arrival of British troops in the line, the Armenians, devoid of any sense of duty or

discipline, and always craven-hearted, said: "Good. The English have come to drive back the Turk. We can go home." And they adopted this attitude, with the result that a front of more than ten miles was manned almost entirely by roughly 800 British. The Armenians were well supplied with machine-guns and ammunition, though the former were apparently private property for the most part. So-called soldiers would leave the line without permission and go into town on the spree, actually taking their machine-guns with them; and, if remonstrated with by their officers (*sic*), would merely shrug their shoulders and retort that they could do as they liked with their own property. Women flitted about the line everywhere. Soldiers, sailors, and civilians lazed about in the sun, occasionally firing their rifles in the blue in much the same way as one scares birds. Everywhere was lack of discipline and organisation combined with ignorance and stupidity. The Chief of the local Staff was known to the British as the "Village Idiot," and lived up to his name, being a perpetual thorn in the flesh of S—— of Skinner's Horse—a real live man.

The position held by the local troops was a crescent-shape ridge, half encircling the town, the southern portion resting on the sea-shore, and the northern point sloping down to a dried-up salt lake of large dimensions. This ridge was roughly five miles from the town. From the salt lake to the coast north of the promontory on which Baku was situated no specific line existed, but odd isolated posts were to be found. Thus, our left flank rested on the sea-coast, and our right flank was entirely in the air. The position taken up by the local troops from first to last was a useless one, and would never have been selected for one moment by a soldier. But there it was, and we had to do what we could with it. It afforded no field of fire, and was entirely dominated by the Turks on the opposite ridge. Between the two positions stretched a valley about 1700 yards in width, through which ran the main railway line from Tiflis to Rostov. A small station stood in No Man's Land, and from this ran a good *pavé* road across the valley, zigzagging up the slopes of the ridge held by the Armenians, and passing through Wolf's Gap, thence to Baku. The country round about had little vegetation, and abounded in salt lakes, some of which had dried up, showing as a huge white patch, whilst others still existed. The Turkish position was dotted with villages and hamlets, and though no sign of life existed it was evident the Turk had plenty of men and machine-guns, and was merely biding his time. Our left, though in a bad position, should have been secure normally, but our right was painfully weak; and after a few days it was evident that the Turks, aided by the local

Tartars, were gradually but surely swinging round, hoping to envelop our right flank. A wild effort by the local troops to frustrate this and win the support of the Tartars failed dismally, and troops had to be sent up to strengthen this flank, several good positions having been lost in the meantime.

The Tartars and Armenians simply hated each other. The former had no enmity whatever against us and were not fond of the Turk, but the atrocious excesses of the Armenians the previous March —they were in the majority —drove them into the arms of the Turk, who made full use of them.

For some days all was quiet. The Turk lay low, and though we pounded his positions soundly he made no reply. However, we could not fail to notice that stores, &c., were being continually sent to their left flank, and the dried salt lake became a regular maze of roads. These stores were finding their way to Mastagi.

Now Mastagi was the garden city of Baku, and from this source was drawn the vegetables, fruit, and farm produce so sorely needed. The main water-supply of Baku also came from this neighbourhood.

It was therefore decided by the Staff that Mastagi must be taken. Accordingly two battalions of Armenians, numbering in all about 500 men, seventy Cossacks, two armoured cars, and a mobile section of four machine-guns with Ford transport (of the D—— brigade), were sent up to clear the village, assisted by one battery of '77's.

The attack was intended to be a surprise, but when, on August 11th, it commenced, we found the Turks ready for us. In spite of the valuable work done by the armoured cars, assisted by the cavalry, the infantry made no headway against the accurate fire poured in on them from cleverly concealed machine-guns. The armoured cars could bear testimony to the accuracy of the fire. Two gunners were hit by bullets entering the gun port, one being killed and the other wounded. In spite of a nasty wound in the nose, John M—— was entirely undaunted, and went in again and again with the "blood lust" showing on his face. It was soon apparent that we were merely running our heads against a brick wall in attempting to take Mastagi by a frontal attack. The place was admirably suited for defence, being well wooded, and possessing many stone-walled gardens and outhouses on the outskirts. These were turned into machine-gun nests by the enemy gunners, and were very hard to locate. The intervening ground, too, was broken, and contained undercover for snipers with enterprise.

Numerous mosques with their minarets afforded excellent observation for the enemy. However, the "Village Idiot" had his own ideas of

tactics, and another effort was made. At one point our line was advanced 600 yards without gaining us any material advantage. In fact, both Leake and Hedge professed being more comfortable in their former position, whilst Cameron got cramp through having to keep his head down to avoid the persistent attention of snipers. So things went on, neither side attempting anything much; and though our guns relentlessly pounded the Turkish positions, the enemy remained "doggo." Plans and ideas were discussed only to pass into oblivion, and how Col. S—— managed to exhibit a smiling countenance to every officer, after a heart-breaking conference with the "Village Idiot," was a marvel to us all. What should we have done without him?

Meanwhile things in Baku were bad. Water was scarce owing to the Turks having cut our main supply, and food was becoming short. There actually was a shortage; but, apart from this, a lot of profiteering went on, and the result of all this redounded on us. Black bread of an indescribable quality—often full of pieces of wood, stones, &c. —cost 10 roubles a pound, and then one had to "queue" in order to get it. This, valuing the rouble at 5d., instead of its normal price of 2s. 8d., meant 4s. 2d. Mutton was 6 roubles a pound; whilst beef, potatoes, eggs, jam, butter, fruit, and cheese were unobtainable. Rice was to be had, but of a poor quality and high price. Caviare alone seemed plentiful, but was a great disappointment to the uninitiated, who thought it a new kind of jam! To surmount these difficulties a food controller was appointed, and in face of considerable opposition he did much to get food to the town at a time when it was sorely needed.

Lack of co-operation, coupled with frequent misunderstandings, made our job a hard one; but the arrival of fresh troops at various periods cheered us up immensely, for we all thought that, should the Turk choose to attack in force, we were in a very tight corner. The local troops were bad, and we knew it; and such knowledge did not tend to make things easier for us. Reinforcements came in very small batches, owing to the fact that they had to be conveyed over bad roads all the way from Baghdad. Some detachments actually marched right through. Still, we did our job as well as we could, and waited for the next move.

It soon came. On the 26th of August, at 10 A.M., after a preliminary bombardment which considerably surprised us, such was its fury, the enemy attacked the centre of the line, his objective being the village and railway junction of Balajari — a most important strategical point.

Around Balajari were the oil-fields of Griazni Vulkan, Binagadi, and Balakhani. At the station itself were large quantities of rolling stock, tank waggons, &c.

Our defensive position at this point consisted of four detached infantry posts with machine-gun support, the two posts on the right resting on the crest of Griazni Vulkan (Dirty Volcano). No friendly wire protected us, and no communication trenches existed from no fault of ours. The force at this point numbered about 120 all told. On its left flank was a gap of half a mile, after which came an Armenian battalion (which ran, incidentally, after the first shot). On our right flank was another Armenian battalion, under a British officer. This battalion remained at their post, finding the logic of Keeleigh's No. 11's irresistible, until that worthy stopped one in the leg and was unable to continue the argument.

The commencement of the attack was the usual thing. Guns, which up to now had remained hidden, rained shrapnel and high explosive on our positions with admirable accuracy, and later the enemy bore down on us in open order. They were no irregulars that we saw, but the "pukka" Turk—well trained, well disciplined, and well equipped. As they came across the open, we at once got on to them with machine-gun and rifle fire, and for a while arrested their progress, in spite of the absence of artillery support. The gunners had apparently bolted also.

It was soon evident that the numerical superiority of the enemy would prevent us from hanging on indefinitely, but we would take our toll before retiring, we thought. Our fire tore gaps in the enemy ranks, but always they came on, until at last they were on top of us, the machine-guns going to the last. A short sharp tussle, of which I remember little, ensued, and we (what remained of us) retired, having held on for over three hours. The position taken up was roughly 400 yards in rear of the old one, and we were soon shelled out of it. We retired still further, taking up a position immediately in front of Balajari itself.

However, these details are tedious. Suffice to say that the Turk, after suffering heavy losses, failed to take Balajari, and a well-executed counter-attack by a company of the N.S. robbed him of almost all his gains. Our losses had been heavy, both infantry and machine-gun section suffering severely.

"Ted," of Galician retreat fame, got a nasty wound in the shoulder; but, using his revolver with great effect, he fought his way out and got away to tell the tale.

The position of our wounded was a pitiable one. No stretchers were available, and the nearest dressing station was fully two miles away. Those that could get away did so, and those that failed were undoubtedly bayoneted by the numerous hangers-on for which the Turkish army is noted. Once arrived in the town they were conveyed to

a hastily erected hospital and admirably treated by Maitland Scott, who throughout worked like a Trojan, and stuck it almost single-handed until the final evacuation.

Desultory fighting continued in this locality for several days, but on the whole our positions were maintained. About this time the Turks began to shell the town, and, though the damage caused was insignificant, great consternation prevailed among the civil population. Many left their homes and worldly possessions and went to Enzeli, Derbent, or other Caspian ports.

Unfortunately, the lessons the Turk had taught us were passed over unheeded, and the "Village Idiot" took no steps whatever either to strengthen existing positions or to make alternative ones, relying on the handful of British troops to drive back two divisions of Turks. Meanwhile the boulevard was crowded with Armenians and their ladies, relieved of the cares and worries (not to mention the discomforts) of protecting their own lives and property.

Thus things remained until the middle of September, and the handful of British in the line, without relief or any hope of it, with indifferent rations, dwindled appreciably owing to the ravages of dysentery, malaria, and influenza.

A flutter of excitement was caused one morning by the arrival of a Turkish officer in our lines. He was an Arab, and on this account had been insulted to such an extent that, unable to bear it any longer, he chose to give himself up—and his friends away. From him we got full information as to the Turks' plans, numbers, and artillery dispositions, and naturally this was of great assistance to us.

The regular Turkish forces opposing us consisted of 7000 of the best troops of the Ottoman Empire. In addition, Kurdish, Tartar, and Georgian irregulars were giving their assistance to the enemy. Orders had been issued that "Baku was necessary to the Ottoman Empire, and therefore was to be taken at all costs," and though the troops were badly fed, promise of loot, and their natural hatred of the Armenians fanned to white heat, kept up their spirits.

The enemy had grossly overestimated our strength, and had he but known what a handful of stalwarts in khaki stood between him and his goal, he could have taken Baku fully six weeks earlier.

On 14th September (the date fixed by our officer prisoner), what eventually proved to be the final attack, culminating in the fall of Baku, took place. At daybreak artillery demonstrations began all along the line. It was very soon evident that the Turks had the preponderance in artillery, and, moreover, were well supplied with ammunition. The dark night was gently changing to dawn as they left their position on the ridge opposite Wolf's Gap, and, ignoring

the pitiful opposition of the local troops, they actually marched in column of route, with artillery, &c., across the intervening valley and up the chaussée road through Wolf's Gap, thus reaching the Armenian main position (left flank) unopposed. Here they deployed in splendid order, and were soon in possession of the entire ridge extending from Bsiajari to the sea. They were actually behind a company of the N. S. holding the coast. Taking their own time, and with the confidence of trained and tried troops, they next proceeded to shell the local troops who had re-formed on a ridge about 800 yards away, and were making a stand in the very last defensive position before Baku. From this ridge an excellent field of fire was obtained, whilst broken ground, a large cemetery, and several chalk-pits considerably enhanced its value.

But so far the Turk was top dog. Meanwhile, to prevent reinforcements coming up, demonstrations and side-shows were started all along the line. The battle raged the entire day with alternating success. Those sectors held by the British on the whole remained in our hands; but though the Armenians, scared by the knowledge that they had at last got their backs to the wall, put up a better fight, the mischief was done. The main line had been given up without a struggle, and a second formed line, protected by barbed wire, did not exist. The open fighting considerably favoured the well-disciplined troops of the enemy. In vain British reinforcements were sent to where the fighting was thickest. They fought like heroes and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. The company cut off by the coast hacked their way through, and under able leadership joined in the fray around the cemetery. Australian, Canadian, and South African officers urged their Armenian battalions on—always in the thick of it themselves. Armoured cars of the D—— Brigade darted hither and thither, and inflicted severe casualties on the advancing enemy. Many deeds of valour were performed by the wearers of the black, red, and green diamonds, but eventually sheer weight of numbers told, and by six o'clock in the evening, after hard fighting, the enemy was on the outskirts of the town.

Our position was not by any means an enviable one, but during the evening something occurred—a something which I regret I cannot disclose—which revealed the base ingratitude of the Armenians, and which indicated to us our course of action. It was decided, as we could no longer hold Baku, that we must quit. Orders were at once issued for the evacuation, and all troops recalled from the line. Ships were commandeered, and troops, wounded, and stores were embarked in spite of threats from our pseudo-allies as to what our fate would be if we attempted to leave the place. The amazing brother

of a distinguished general, left to his own devices, practically stripped the local arsenal and got away with the spoils, he and his accomplice holding six-shooters at the heads of the captain and chief engineer respectively. Thus the enemy was cheated of a very valuable capture.

It was about eleven o'clock when the "Village Idiot" issued his ultimatum to us, and pointed out how the gunboats would blow us off the map if we attempted to move; but with a curt "Carry on, then," or its Russian equivalent, Colonel S—— gave the order to get away, and, with shells and bullets screaming over the stricken town, we left for Enzeli.

We had no cause to reproach ourselves. We had done our bit, and perhaps a bit more. Playing a lone hand, let down by all who should have helped us, fighting alongside troops who, we knew, were utterly unreliable, hemmed in by intrigue more dangerous than enemy attacks, we kept at bay for a period of six weeks almost ten times our numbers.

Baku was merely a side-show, and no doubt is already forgotten, but even side-shows must needs have their rows of wooden crosses, their wards of maimed men, a tragic consequence of war.

THE WAR OFFICE IN WAR TIME.—III.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR C. E. CALLWELL, K.C.B.

No branch of the Public Service in any way connected with the War Office has been more mercilessly abused during the war than the censorship. In particular has the Press Censorship been taken to task, nor can it reasonably be asserted that none of the criticisms hurled at this organisation have been justified. Mistakes have not unnaturally been made from time to time. It is human to err, and individual censors have been guilty of errors of judgment on occasion. Specimens of information withheld could easily be brought to light, which might have been given to the world with perfect propriety. There was at least one instance early in the conflict of an official communiqué issued by the French military authorities in Paris being bowdlerised before publication on this side of the Channel.

Few of the detractors of the Press Censorship, on the other hand, have given evidence of possessing more than a shadowy conception of the difficult and delicate nature of the duties which that institution was called upon to carry out. There is little reason to suppose that the critics have the slightest idea of the value of the services which it has performed. Nor is there anything to show that it is generally realised that the blunders committed, such as they were, were by no means confined to the malapert blue-pencilling of items of information that might have appeared without disclosing anything whatever to the enemy. As a matter of fact, cases occurred of intelligence slipping through the meshes which ought not on any account to have been made public property.

When, for example, one particular London newspaper twice over during the very critical opening weeks of the struggle divulged movements of troops in France, the peccant passage was, on each occasion, found on investigation to have been acquiesced in by a censor—lapses on the part of overworked and weary men poring over sheaves of proof-slips late at night. We lost sight at the War Office of the Belgian division which the Germans drove out of Namur, but discovered what had become of the lost legion from the reproduction of a photograph that depicted the division embarking at Dieppe for Ostend, which appeared in one of our halfpenny picture papers; the censorship was not in fault, as the issue had not been submitted for scrutiny, but a copy probably found its way to Berlin. At a somewhat later date, a journal, in reporting His Majesty's farewell visit to the troops, contrived to acquaint all whom it might concern that the 28th Division, made up of

regular battalions brought from overseas, was about to cross the Channel.

It will readily be understood that incidents of this kind—those quoted are merely samples—worried the officials charged with supervision, and tended to make them almost over-fastidious. Soldiers of experience, as the censors were, remembered Nelson's complaint that his plans were disclosed by a Gibraltar print, Wellington's remonstrances during the Peninsular War, and the information conveyed to the Germans by a Paris newpaper of MacMahon's movement on Sedan. They were, moreover, aware that indignant representations with reference to the untoward communicativeness of certain of our prominent journals were being made by the French and Belgians. So the Press Bureau, which, it must be remembered, was a civil department independent of the War Office, took to sending doubtful passages across for our decision—a procedure which necessarily created delay and caused inconvenience to editors. Publication, it may be mentioned, was approved in quite four cases out of five when such references were made. One, indeed, rather wondered at times where the difficulty came in.

But a verdict was called for in one case which imposed an uncomfortable responsibility. This was when a telegram from the Military Correspondent of 'The Times' from the front, revealing the shell shortage from which our troops were suffering, was submitted from Printing House Square to the Press Bureau in the middle of May 1915, and was transmitted thence to us for adjudication. Publication of the telegram could at the worst merely serve as a confirmation of knowledge which the enemy must already possess, and national interests did seem to demand that the people of this country should be made aware how matters stood. Choice of three alternatives offered itself,—to refuse leave, to refer to higher authority, to pass for publication—and the third alternative was adopted. One or two minor details with regard to particular types of ordnance were, however, excised.

For the General Staff at the War Office to have formulated apposite, hard-and-fast regulations for the guidance of the Press Bureau, covering all questions likely to arise, would, it may be observed, have been virtually impracticable, or at all events would not have really solved the problem. Everything must necessarily depend upon the interpretation placed on such ordinances by the individuals who were to be guided by them. Thus a rigorous enactment governing any particular type of subject, if strictly interpreted by harassed censors, would prevent any tidings as to that subject leaking out at all; while an indulgent enactment, if loosely interpreted by the staff of the Bureau, might well lead to most undesirable disclosures being made in the columns of the Press. Censors planted

down in London could not, furthermore, be kept fully acquainted with the position of affairs at the front—a factor which greatly aggravated the perplexities of their task. We of the General Staff in Whitehall were in this respect very differently situated from G.H.Q. Over on the other side, where the situation of our own troops and of the French and the Belgians was known from hour to hour, newspaper representatives could always have been instructed by the bear-leaders in charge of them as to exactly what they might, and what they might not, touch upon in reference to any development that happened to be in progress.

Another phase of the censorship, the Cable Censorship, housed in the city and differing from the Press Censorship in that it was entirely under War Office control, deserves a word of mention. Its potentialities had not been fully foreseen when it was established automatically on mobilisation, and of what it accomplished the general public know practically nothing at all. The conception of such an institution had at the outset merely been that of setting up a barrier to prevent naval and military information calculated to be of service to, or transmitted in the interests of, the enemy, passing over the wires whether in cipher or in clear. But an enterprising, prescient, and masterful staff perceived ere long that their powers could with advantage to the State be developed and turned to account in other directions, and notably in the direction of stifling the commercial activities of the Central Powers in the Western Hemisphere. Within a very few months the Cable Censorship had transformed itself out of an effective shield for defence into a potent weapon of attack. The measure of its services to the country will probably never be known, as some of its procedure cannot perhaps advantageously be disclosed. Its labours have been unadvertised and its praises unsung. But those who were behind the scenes are well aware of what it accomplished along unseen side-tracks in bringing about the downfall of the Hun. The Cable Censorship may indeed be said to take rank with the Supply Directorate, and with the exiguous Movements Directorate during the first year and a half of hostilities, in the very highest grade of successful War Office branches during the war. Only to the Topographical Section of the General Staff need it yield pride of place.

The Topographical Section has been little heard of, although the staff at the Front knew how much they owed to it; a word may therefore not be out of place concerning its distinguished record. Its merits were brought home to me at a very early stage of the conflict, and it was most gratifying to find a branch, for which one suddenly found oneself after a fashion responsible, to be capable of so promptly meeting

emergencies that had not been anticipated. The Expeditionary Force had taken with it generous supplies of maps portraying the regions adjacent to the Franco-Belgian frontier, where it proposed to operate; but a somewhat hasty retreat to a point right away back, south-east of Paris, had formed no part of its programme. One afternoon, a day or two after the first clash of arms near Mons, a wire arrived demanding the instant despatch of maps of the country as far to the rear as the Seine and the Marne. Now, as all units had to be supplied on a liberal scale, this meant hundreds of copies of each of a considerable number of different large-scale sheets, besides hundreds of copies of two or three, more general, small-scale sheets; nevertheless, the consignment was on its way before midnight. A day or two later G.H.Q. wired for maps as far back as Orleans, a day or two later, again, for maps as far as the mouth of the Loire, and yet a day or two later, for maps down to Bordeaux—this last request representing thousands of sheets; but on each occasion the demand was met within a few hours and without the slightest hitch. It was a remarkable achievement—an achievement attributable in part to military foresight dating back to the days when Messrs Asquith, Lloyd George, Churchill and Co. either deliberately, or else as a result of sheer ignorance and pitiful ineptitude, were deceiving their countrymen as to the gravity of the German menace, an achievement attributable also in part to military administrative efficiency of a high order in a time of crisis. The Topographical Section, it should be added, was able to afford highly-appreciated assistance to our French and Belgian allies in the matter of supplying them with maps of their own countries.

But it was not always a case of maps being despatched from the War Office. Sometimes they were being delivered to that institution. One night, after 11 P.M. and when there was hardly anybody left in the place, I found myself on the telephone being worried from Waterloo. It appeared that some packages—"seems to be maps and is marked 'very urgent'"—had fetched up at that terminus; would I send for them, and be sharp about it. A boy scout would have known exactly what to do; but the scouts always went off duty at 6 P.M., ceasing to serve their country until next morning, unless required to wake up people at night (who had never done them any harm) with melodious "all clear" buglings. There were no scouts. The Topographical Section had gone to bed. There was nobody to consult except War Office messengers, and War Office messengers are not especially distinguished by originality of thought, so I intimated by the telephone that I would send a taxi. A particularly offensive snort vibrated in the receiver. "Ain't there no officer in the plice—and a war

on? Taxi! Wy, it'll take a lorry—no, two on 'em, fat-'ead! Just you send 'em along now at once and none o' yer sauce!" One did not keep lorries handy, no insistent demand for maps had come in from G.H.Q., and the victim of a telephone outrage as a last resort always holds a trump card in his hand. He can go away. It was obviously an occasion for playing that card, so the L.S.W.R. wretch did not win the trick after all.

During the first two or three weeks after fighting started, waifs and strays who had been run over by the Boches, but who had picked themselves up somehow and had fetched up at the coast, used to turn up at the War Office and find their way to my department. For some reason or other they always presented themselves after dinner—like the coffee. The first arrival was a young cavalry officer, knocked off his horse in the preliminary encounters by what had evidently been the detonation of a well-pitched-up high-explosive, and who was still suffering from a touch of what we now know as shell-shock. He proved to be the very embodiment of effective military training, because, although he was to the last degree vague as to how he had got back across the Channel, and only seemed to know that he had had a bath at the Cavalry Club, he was able to give most useful and detailed information as to what he had noted after recovering consciousness while making his way athwart the German trains and troops in reserve that were pouring along behind Von Kluck's troops in front line. One observed the same thing in the case of another cavalry officer who arrived some days later, after a prolonged succession of tramps by night from the Sambre to Ostend. "You'll sleep well to-night," I remarked when thanking him for the valuable information that he had been able to impart—and of a sudden he looked ten years older. "I couldn't sleep a wink last night at Ostend," he muttered in a bewildered sort of way, "and I don't feel as if I'd ever sleep again." We did not wear uniform in the War Office for the first month or so, and one night about this time, on meeting a disreputable and suspicious-looking character on the stairs, garbed in the vesture affected by the foreign mechanic, I was debating whether to demand of the interloper what he was doing within the sacred precincts, when he abruptly accosted me with: "I say, d'you happen to know where in this infernal rabbit-warren a blighter called the Something of Military Operations hangs out?" His address indicated him to be a refugee officer looking for my department.

These prodigals had such interesting experiences to recount that in a weak moment I gave instructions for them to be brought direct to me, and about 10 P.M. one night, when there happened to be a lot of unfinished stuff to be disposed of before repairing homewards, a tarnished-looking

but otherwise smart and well-set-up private soldier was let loose on me. A colloquy somewhat as follows ensued:—

"What regiment?"

"The Rile Irish, sorr.

"Ah! Well, and how have you got along back here?"

"Sorr, it's the truth I'm tellin' ye, sorra ilse. Sure wasn't I marchin' and fightin' and hidin' and eraalin' for wakes and wakes" (the Royal Irish could only have detrained at Le Cateau about ten days earlier) "before I gits to that place as they calls Boulong—a gran' place, sorr, wid quays and thruck like it was the North Waal—an' a fellah takes me to the Commandant, sorr, where I seen a major-man wid red tabs an' an eye like Polly-famous. 'Sorr,' sez I to him, sez I; sez I, 'it's gittin' back to the rigimint I'd be afther,' sez I. 'Ye'll not,' sez he, 'divil a stir,' sez he; 'ye'll go to Lunnon,' sez he. 'Will I,' sez I. 'Ye will,' sez he; 'take him down to the boat at wanst, sergeant,' sez he, and the sergeant right turns me and marches me out. 'Sergeant dear,' sez I, 'sure why can't I be gittin' back to the rigimint,' sez I. 'Agh, t'hell out o' that,' sez he; 'sure didn't ye hear what the major bin and said,' sez he, an' he gin me over to a carpral—one on thim ugly Jocks, sorr—an' down we goes by the quays to the boat—a gran' boat, sorr, wid ladies an' childer an' Frinch an' Bilgians, an' all sorts, as minded me on the ould *Innisfallen*. D'y' iver know the ould *Innisfallen*, sorr, as sails from Carrk to some place as I misremember the name on, sorr?"

"Crossed over on her once from Cork to Milford."

"Ye did, yer honour—sorr, I mane. Glory be to God—to think o' that! Well, sorr, I'd a sup of tay at one on thim shtahls, sorr, an' the Jock gives me me papers an' puts me aboard, sorr. It's mostly onaisy in me inside I am, sorr, on the say, but it was beautiful calm an'——"

"Yes, yes; but look here—Where was it you left your regiment?"

"Is it me, sorr? Me lave me rigiment, sorr? Me wid three years' sarvis an' sorra intry in my shate at all, only two, wan time I was dthronk wid a cowld in me nose, sorr. Me lave me rigimint? It was the rigimint lift me, sorr. As I tell ye just now, we'd bin marchin' an' fightin' for wakes and wakes, an' it was tired I was, sorr, bate I was, an' we was havin' a halt, sorr; an' I sez to Mick Shehan from Mallow, as is in my platoon, 'Mick,' sez I. 'Tim,' sez he, wid his mouth full of scoff. 'Mick,' sez I, 'it's gwan to have a shlape, I am,' sez I, 'an' ye'll wake me, Mick darlint, when the fall-in goes.' 'Begob an' why wouldn't I, Tim,' sez he, 'so I ain't shlapin' mysilf,' sez he. 'Ye'll no forgit, Mick,' sez I. 'Agh, shut yer mouth, why would I be the wan to forgit,' sez he. But whin I wuk up, the divil a rigimint was there at all, at all, only me, sorr; an' there was a lot of quare-lookin' chaps as I sinsed by the look on thim was Jarmins. I was

concaled by a ditch,[1] an' settin' down by a bit o' whin, I was, sorr, or they seen me for sure. 'Phwat 'll I do at all,' sez I to mysilf, sez I, an'——"

"Just stop a minute; where was all this?"

"Where was it? Why, in Fraance, sorr, where ilse would it be? Well, sorr, as I was just startin' to tell ye, there was a lot of quare-lookin' chaps as I sinsed by the look of thim was Jarmins, an'——"

"Yes, but good Lord, man, what was the name of the place in France where all this happened?"

"Place is it, sorr? Sure it wasn't any place at all, but one of thim kind of places as the name on has shlipped me mimry, a bog, sorr—leastways it wasn't a bog as ye'd rightly call a bog in Oireland, sorr—no turf nor there wasn't no wather. I mind now, sorr, it was what the chaps at the 'Shott calls a 'hathe,' sorr. There was trees contagious, an' whins; sure wasn't I tellin' ye just now as I was settin' down by a bit of whin, sorr——"

But it had been borne in on me that this had become a young man's job, so I succeeded, not without some difficulty, in consigning the gallant Royal Irishman—still pouring forth priceless intelligence material—into the hands of a messenger to be taken to the officer on duty. Manuals of instruction that deal with the subject of eliciting military information in time of war impress upon you that the Oriental always wants to tell you what he thinks you want him to tell you. But the Irishman tells you what he wants to tell you himself, and it isn't the least use trying to stop him.

Some of the criticisms directed at the military authorities for maintaining a needless and irritating secretiveness were possibly to some extent warranted. But complaints on this head were in reality often the result of misapprehension. Those lamentations, for instance, that units which had performed distinguished service were not named in communiqués, overlooked the fact that the mention of some particular regiment in a telegraphic account of a combat despatched from the headquarters of a great army may do grave injustice to other regiments engaged. Because a brigadier singles out one of his battalions for mention, it does not follow that a battalion may not have done equally well even in the brigade alongside; the other brigadier may not have thought it necessary to send a special report. Divisional commanders may not pass on reports as to individual units received from brigadiers, nor corps commanders' reports sent on by divisions; and yet the title of some lucky unit may percolate right through from a brigadier to G.H.Q. If the Chief telegraphs the achievements of that unit home, the publication of his communiqué

[1] *Anglicè*, bank.

in the newspapers will in all likelihood be unfair to several units with equally stirring exploits to their credit. The true story of a modern battle cannot be told at a moment's notice. Numberless reports have to be investigated and weighed and compared before the real facts are known even approximately.

In a cablegram describing the fight of Tel-el-Kebir, despatched within an hour or two of that sharp, short, and singularly decisive engagement coming to an end, Sir G. Wolseley wired: "Great emulation evinced by regiments to be first in the enemy's works. All went at them straight. The Royal Irish Regiment particularly distinguished itself by its dash and the manner in which it closed with the enemy." No other unit was mentioned in this hurried communication. Now, the brunt of the action had in reality fallen upon the Highland Brigade, belonging to the 2nd Division under Sir Edward Hamley. That brigade had carried much more formidable hostile entrenchments than those which the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Division, to which the Royal Irish belonged, had been called upon to assail. Moreover, the Highlanders had, as a matter of fact, delivered their onset a quarter of an hour earlier than the others, owing to the accident of having reached their objective just at the first glint of dawn, and when the 2nd Brigade was still half a mile from its section of the Egyptian lines. The Royal Irish, furthermore, had only 21 killed and wounded, whereas the Highland Brigade lost 225—its casualties varying between 36 and 71 per battalion. Some ill-feeling was created by that cablegram, dictated by the Commander-in-Chief when the facts were not fully known to him, and the incident may have been a contributory cause to the estrangement between himself and the commander of the 2nd Division—an estrangement which found indirect expression in a vivid description of the action, from Sir Edward Hamley's pen, that appeared a few months later.

Mention of an individual regiment was likely to be much more informative to the enemy during the early months of the war, it must be remembered, than came to be the case later. The exact order of battle of the Expeditionary Force had been appearing in the Monthly Army List, as also the distribution of our line battalions overseas; so that the naming of any infantry unit was, from the intelligence point of view, equivalent to naming the brigade and the division to which it belonged. The constitution of the pre-war Territorial Divisions was, moreover, also shown in the Monthly Army List. Orders of battle soon ceased to appear in that periodical publication, but the Germans, of course, possessed older copies; even so, the Boches made great efforts to obtain

copies after it was decided to make the monthly issues confidential. The perplexities of the enemy intelligence experts must have increased as the New Army began to take the field, and when our line regiments came to comprise from one dozen to three dozen battalions, and to be represented in a number of different divisions. References to "West Country troops," or to "Lancashire infantry," told antagonists little—and they did not tell people in this country much beyond indicating that warriors from Old England, a portion of the Empire which was providing more than half of its fighting forces, were bearing a hand no less than Scotsmen and Anzacs and Canadians.

But there was a type of official secretiveness which was criticised freely in the opening months of the struggle with better reason. This took the form of concealing, or at any rate of minimising, reverses—an entirely new attitude for soldiers of this country to take up. We should never have massed those swarms of volunteers in South Africa in 1900, drawn from the United Kingdom and from the Dominions and from the Colonies, had Stormberg and Magersfontein and Colenso been artistically camouflaged; the facts were blurted out, and the Empire rose to the occasion. The truth is that optimism was a perfect curse during the war; it kept men from flocking to the colours, and it checked the ardour of the workers upon whom so much depended. Take, for example, Mr Lloyd George's speech last April in Edinburgh, close to the great shipbuilding centre of the Clyde. He must needs go cackling about an encouraging Admiralty report in reference to anti-submarine operations, instead of rubbing it into his audience that British sinkings had almost exactly doubled British construction during the previous month, as official figures had just announced. A special Sunday edition of a morning paper, with a somewhat hysterical account of what a journalist far away from the fighting front had seen of the retreat from Mons, aroused a storm of opprobrium about the 1st of September 1914; but a good many of us in the War Office regarded the incident in the light of a blessing in disguise, as something was badly wanted to wake the nation up to the gravity of the situation, and there was not then—nor has there been at any other time—the slightest fear of the people of this country losing heart. It is not their way. The incorporation in the Defence of the Realm Act of ordinances directed against the propagation of alarmist reports calculated to cause despondency was no doubt necessary; but one welcomed the appearance of well-informed jeremiads at times.

References to the Press Censorship above, suggest the subject of the relations between the War Office and the world of journalism during the war, which were not always too

cordial. Now, the wisdom of the attitude taken up by the War Office and by G.H.Q. in France in the matter is a question of opinion; but my view was, and still is, that as regards one point the newspapers were treated injudiciously at the start. One was indeed in the uncomfortable position of administering a policy that one disliked. The General Staff had, for some years prior to 1914, intended that a reasonable number of correspondents should proceed to the front under official ægis on the outbreak of a European war, and a regular organisation for the purpose actually took shape automatically within the War Office on mobilisation, in concert with the Press. A small staff, under charge of an officer designated for the appointment two or three years earlier, with clerks and cars, came into being *pari passu* with the Headquarters Staff of the Expeditionary Force on the historic 3rd of August. The officer, a man of attractive personality and forceful character, master of his profession and an ideal holder of the post, had been in control of the Press representatives at army manœuvres in 1912 and 1913, and was therefore familiar with the gentlemen who had been chosen to take the field. (He, unfortunately, was killed while serving on the staff in France in the winter of 1915-1916.) The General Staff had, moreover, impressed upon correspondents at manœuvres that they ought to regard the operations in the light of instruction for themselves in duties they would be performing in actual hostilities.

But all this went by the board when war came. Leave for correspondents to go to the front, whether under official auspices or any other way, was refused, and the staff and the clerks and the cars abode idle in London. The Press world accepted this development philosophically for the opening two or three weeks, realising that that was no time for visitors in the war zone; but then the Fourth Estate became restive. Enterprising reporters proceeded to the theatre of war without permission, while experienced journalists, deluded by past promises, remained behind hoping for the best—the old hounds were kept in the kennel while the young entry ran riot with no hunt servants to rate them. Some unauthorised representatives of the Press were, it is true, arrested by the French, and had the French dealt with them in vertebrate fashion—decapitated them or sent them to the Devil's Island — we should have known where we were. But as the culprits were simply released with a caution the situation became ridiculous. No newspaper man boggles over marching to a dungeon with gyves upon his wrists and tarrying there for some hours without sustenance—it is part of the game. Instead of the supervision of messages from the front falling upon officers of G.H.Q., who were in a position to wrestle with the task to good purpose, this devolved upon the Press Bureau in London, which could not

perform the office nearly as well, and was moreover smothered under folios of journalistic matter emanating from quarters other than the theatre of war. Furthermore, editors and managers and proprietors of our more prominent newspapers considered that we had broken our engagements—as indeed we had—and at the very fall of the flag the Press of the country was fitted out with a legitimate grievance. Besides, the War Office was flouted.

That is the worst of a state of belligerency—the War Office does get flouted at such times. Even the Military Secretary, who, as keeper of the Secretary of State's conscience, when he has one, takes himself as seriously as anybody, found himself treated as of small account on one occasion. An officer, secured by tumultuary process during early strivings to expand the land forces and found to be a disappointment, had been invited to convert his sword into a ploughshare; the reply is understood to have read somewhat as follows:—

"Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of ——, directing me to resign my commission. I will see you damned first.—Yours, ——."

New Army officers are so unconventional.

But if the Press had grievances against the military authorities, these also had grounds for complaint against the Press. Before the war one accepted as gospel the pontifical utterances of newspapers concerning matters of which one knew nothing—the law, say, or economics, or art. But never again! Journalists have given themselves away too badly on occasion over warlike operations, army organisation, and so forth, for one to let oneself be bluffed in future. After a U-boat outrage on a hospital ship, a London morning paper in its first leader of the 15th of March last actually urged that half a dozen Boche officers should be "sent to sea in every hospital ship *and in every transport*"—the italics are mine. When an Army Order in April last laid down that promotion to general would in future be by selection, not seniority, newspapers of quite good standing tumbled head over heels into a pitfall of their own creation. They started an attack upon the War Office for not having recognised the principle of advancement by merit in the higher ranks of the service sooner, having failed to note that the Army Order concerned promotion to the rank of full general, and exposing their ignorance of the fact that promotions to the rank of brigadier-general, major-general, and lieutenant-general had been effected by selection for several years past. Nobody expects editors to know details of this kind; but it is their duty to investigate before starting a crusade. Then there has been the recent stirring up of discontent over demobilisation—the handiwork of the very journals that clamoured the loudest

about pacifism, defeatism, and all the rest of it. Probably they had no intention of making mischief. But the fool is often more dangerous than the knave.

The Press, it may be observed, is probably responsible to some extent for the community's hugging of the delusion that interest and influence are all-powerful in Whitehall, a phenomenon for which my experience in those purlieus during the war perhaps provides some explanation. To be invited to take a hand in obtaining appointments for people about whom one knew nothing and cared less, in services with which one had no connection, was a daily event. The procedure then followed was automatic and appropriate. A reply would be dictated intimating that one would do what one could—a mere form of words, needless to say, as one had no intention of doing anything. And yet there would often be a disconcerting sequel. Profuse outpourings of gratitude in letter form would come to hand two or three weeks later: Jimmy had got his job, entirely owing to one's efforts in his behalf, and the memory of it would be carried to the grave. One had not the faintest recollection of what all the bother was about; but it was easy to dictate another letter expressing gratification at the recognition of Jimmy's merits. To hint that the appointment had presumably been made by the responsible official on the strength of an application received from Jimmy in proper form, that there had been no wheels within wheels, and that back-stairs influence had never got beyond the first landing, would have been disobliging.

And now there is still one matter which seems to call for mention before bringing these random jottings to an end—the troubles of the General Staff with the amateur strategist in high places, than whom there is no more fearful wild-fowl living. The activities of this pest may not have been so patent to the public since the Antwerp and Dardanelles fiascos as they were before, but they have none the less been almost perpetually at work and, had they not been kept in check, might well have lost us the war. The following incident will serve to illustrate the sort of thing that the General Staff were up against.

Early in October 1917, the War Cabinet hit upon a great notion. On the close of the Flanders operations a portion of Sir D. Haig's forces were to be switched to Alexandretta to succour Generals Allenby and Marshall in their respective campaigns, and were to be switched back again so as to be on hand for the opening of active work on the Western Front at the beginning of March 1918—a three months' excursion. This scheme seems to have been evolved quite *au grand sérieux* and not as a joke. At all events, a conference (which I was called in to attend as knowing more about the Dardanelles business from the War Office end than anybody else) assembled in the

Chief of the Imperial General Staff's room one Sunday morning—the First Sea Lord and the Deputy First Sea Lord with subordinates, together with prominent members of the General Staff—and we gravely debated the idiotic project. The War Cabinet had heard of Alexandretta before, for its possibilities were always cropping up in Downing Street, and they must have known that landing facilities were defective, and that, as ships lying there would be at the mercy of submarines, troops going to those parts would have to be put ashore in Ayas Bay, to the north of the Gulf—where there were no facilities at all.

Nobody but a lunatic would, after Gallipoli experiences, undertake serious land operations in the Alexandretta region with less than six divisions. To ship six divisions absorbs a million tons. There were United States troops unable to cross the Atlantic for want of tonnage, and, allowing for disembarkation difficulties on the Syrian coast, two soldiers or animals or vehicles could be transported from America to French or English ports for every one soldier or animal or vehicle that could be shifted from Marseilles or Toulon to the War Cabinet's fresh theatre of operations, given the same amount of shipping. Our Italian allies were in sore straits over coal for munitions and transportation purposes, simply because sufficient tonnage could not be placed at their disposal. Our own food supplies were causing anxiety, and the maintenance of the forces at Salonika afforded constant proof of the insecurity of the Mediterranean as a sea route. But fatuous diversion of shipping represented quite a minor objection to this opera-bouffe proposal. For, allowing for railing troops from the Western Front to the Côte Azure and embarking them, and for the inevitable delays in landing a force of all arms on a beach with improvised piers, the troops at the head of the hunt would have to be re-embarking in Ayas Bay by the time that those at the tail of the hunt came to be emptied out on the shores of the Gulf of Iskanderun; otherwise the wanderers would miss the venue on the Western Front.

Had this been suggested by a brand-new Ministry—a Labour Cabinet, say, reviewing the military situation at its very first meeting—nobody could reasonably have complained. People quite new to the game naturally enough overlook practical questions connected with moving troops by land and sea, and do not realise that those questions govern the whole business. Any third-form boy, given a map of Turkey-in-Asia and told of campaigns in Palestine, and Mesopotamia, and Armenia, and of the bulk of enemy resources being found about Constantinople and in Anatolia, who did not instantly perceive how nice it would be to dump an army down at Alexandretta, would, it is earnestly to be hoped, be sent up to have his dormant intelli-

gence awakened by outward applications according to plan. Quite knowledgeable and well-educated people call this sort of thing "strategy," and so in a sense it is—it is strategy in the same sense as the multiplication table is mathematics. If you don't know that two added to two makes four, and divided by two makes one, the integral calculus and functional equations are not for you; if it has never occurred to you that by throwing your army, or part of it, across the route that your opponent gets his food and his ammunition and his reinforcements by you will cause him inconvenience, then your name is not likely to be handed down to posterity with those of the Great Captains. But the War Cabinet of October 1917 contained personages of light and leading who had been immersed up to the neck in the conduct of hostilities ever since early in 1915.

Scarcely had this exhibition of "uncanny intuition in questions of military strategy" been disposed of, when the Caporetto affair called for some British divisions from the Western Front to hurry to the Piave—and they took six weeks over the move. For months, the hankering after a transfer of force from France to the Isonzo (*en route* to Vienna) with which certain members of the War Cabinet were afflicted, had hung over the General Staff like a pall. That the enemy could move troops to the proposed new jumping-off place faster than we could, caused the Moltkes of 10 Downing Street no qualms. That divisions detailed for the job would be lost for several weeks was, as like as not, simply disbelieved, for the exuberances of these people are due sometimes to bumptious perversity rather than to mere ineptitude. That the scheme meant hunting for trouble in a mountainous region, where effective combinations of war by masses of men must prove impracticable, was treated as of no account. Do its advocates realise now, one wonders, that the dramatically sudden collapse, after only three or four days' combat, which befell the Austro-Hungarian hosts last October would not have occurred but for their having come down from the hills into the Friuli Plain a year before, and having exchanged a good position for a bad one?

The truth is that the "Easternism" with which the War Cabinet was infected, and the more prosaic "Westernism" which had the military authorities in thrall, stood respectively for imagination and for knowledge, although imagination is perhaps hardly quite the correct expression to use. Easterners could never be got to realise that, in spite of gigantic armaments, of vast concourses of fighting men, and of reputedly impregnable Hindenburg and Wotan Lines, the Western Front was Germany's weak point—and here their imagination perhaps took a somewhat diluted form. On the Western Front the Boche was forced to fight the French and ourselves fair and square, and enjoying none of those

advantages in respect to interior lines, to communications, and so forth, which came to his aid the moment we started knocking our heads against the Julian Alps or getting ourselves entangled in the miasmic plains or the roadless uplands of the Near East.

Fundamentally opposed as are the two schools of thought, both no doubt accept Napoleon as first amongst exponents of the art of war; but even him they regard from totally different points of view. The inspiration, the unerring instinct, the almost extravagant phantasies and the weird fatalism of the illustrious Corsican, rivet the attention of Easterners dazzled with the sun of Austerlitz. Westerners, better informed, attribute Napoleon's triumphs rather to that unexampled mastery of detail, that infinite capacity for taking pains, and that exhaustive acquaintance with all branches of the soldier's profession, which so distinguished the conqueror from all rivals; they picture him, prostrate on a map on the floor gripping a pair of compasses, scrawling hieroglyphics on scraps of paper, weighing chances, measuring distances, computing the date by which redistribution of his forces would become practicable, and laboriously taking stock of all available and potential resources, rather than dreaming dreams and building castles in the air. Few makers of history have been so richly endowed with imagination as Napoleon, but few men thus gifted have been so well able to keep their imagination under control. When it came to business he dropped that sort of thing. And yet, twice, when planning combinations of war, imagination took charge of him. The first time it carried him to Acre, the second to Moscow.

The projected Alexandretta and Italian stunts above mentioned were not, it must be understood, isolated cases. The War Cabinet was constantly busy and agog, bent on some wild-cat scheme or other, of which the absurdity had to be demonstrated by the General Staff. Civilians and soldiers no doubt are apt to regard questions from different standpoints, and it is not suggested that civilians must always necessarily be in the wrong. A company of garrison artillery in which I was serving a good many years ago accepted a challenge one time from a local football team, and the services of the company sergeant-major were enlisted to perform in the capacity of referee. When the contest was at its very height, a stentorian appeal for "offside" against one of the company subalterns, who happened to be playing, echoed forth from the enemy players and was taken up by the sympathetic civilian spectators ranged round the ground. But the sergeant-major was equal to the occasion. In that raucous voice of his, at sound of which recruits were wont to quail and even gunners adorned with two good-conduct badges would manifest a passing interest in parade ob-

servances, the decision was announced. "An officer," he thundered, "can't be off-side." So taken aback were the opposing team and the gallery by the dictum of this Daniel come to Judgment, that they for the moment accepted his decision like lambs. But there were murmurings heard subsequently, and in the following Saturday's issue of the local newspaper its football expert was extremely rude.

Side-shows? Mischievous, even disastrous, as have been the performances of amateur strategists in high places in the matter of side-shows, the attitude taken up by some military experts with regard to this subject has not been faultless. Uncompromisingly to condemn all side-shows as such is absurd. Certain side-shows have been obligatory. Egypt had to be safeguarded against Ottoman efforts, and the channels that lay open to German penetration leading towards Hindustan, *vid* Persia, had to be closed. So long, moreover, as a side-show only absorbs — or mainly absorbs — units which cannot profitably be employed in the vital theatre of war, the resultant diversion of force may be virtually unobjectionable. Operations in Mesopotamia and East Africa have throughout been prosecuted very largely with Indian and South African troops, and with mounted corps that have not been needed on the Western Front. Sir E. Allenby's masterly autumn campaign of 1918 was carried through almost entirely with soldiers who would have been of no very great assistance to Sir D. Haig. Our armies in Mesopotamia, East Africa, Egypt, and Palestine furthermore have been fed from the East, not from the West; so that the ever-present shipping difficulty has been far less acute in their case than in that of hosts embattled nearer home.

Palaver about side-shows may, nevertheless, be imprudent, and it might even assume properties of the boomerang. There was that unpleasant overwhelming of the 5th Army near St Quentin of last March, for instance. Incontinent jubilation over side-shows might provoke retorts concerning the hasty withdrawal of British divisions and units from Palestine after that grave set-back on the Western Front, instead of the displacement of force being effected before the event as had been recommended by the military authorities. Inquisitiveness concerning this particular matter might indeed carry investigations a step further. The hustling of troops engaged on side-shows westwards after the March contretemps might lead to awkward controversies over man-power. Some prying member of the legislature might even move for the production of a certain Memorandum on the Position and Prospects of Recruiting, which the Army Council submitted to the War Cabinet in the summer of 1917. (A copy of the document, which came into my possession at the time, lies before me.) Why

were steps to swell the ranks only taken, helter-skelter, after our troops had been thrust back upon Amiens, instead of their having been taken some months earlier in obedience to professional appeals? When enlarging in a speech at Leeds upon his War Cabinet's efforts to restore the situation, Mr Lloyd George did not mention that the situation had actually been saved by the grit and heroism of troops who had been left in the lurch. The War Cabinet only closed the stable-door after the steed had been within an ace of being stolen. General Gough's and General Byng's armies saved the steed, in spite of the War Cabinet having left the stable-door open; and one cause of that door having been left open was persistence in side-shows. So the less said about side-shows the better. That form of offensive invites counter-attack.

The aphorism that the man who never makes a mistake seldom makes anything worth making, is applicable also to institutions. Of all our British institutions, none has in the past been the target for more sustained criticism and for less measured abuse than the War Office; and yet, even if it made innumerable mistakes in the course of the national fight for existence which has now come to an end, that institution made something worth the making. It fashioned those armies which, under proved leadership, played so prominent and glorious a part in bringing the enemy to his knees. It transformed Great Britain into a first-class military Power, not by gradual process during periods of peace as Prussia constructed that tremendous military machine of hers between Waterloo and Sadowa, but with the enemy in the very gate and during the progress of a contest of which the like had not before been seen. Responsibility for the nation's land forces having been unprepared for a struggle on so colossal a scale cannot be laid at the doors of the military authorities in Whitehall. Intent on votes and the puerilities of faction, the politicians who were at the head of affairs in the pre-war period had grievously betrayed their trust, had ignored portents which it was within their province to take note of and to act upon, and had thrown dust in the eyes of a confiding and, in respect to international defence problems, an unsophisticated people.

Called upon of a sudden to retrieve the position, Lord Kitchener was compelled to lay in haste, if surely, those solid foundations upon which a vast improvised military system adapted to meet the critical situation was within two years built up. The War Office had to pull the country out of the hole—and did so. Of such a record no Department of State in this or any other land need feel ashamed.

THE BENCH AND BAR OF ENGLAND.

BY J. A. STRAHAN.

X. THE LIFE OF A LAWYER.

In his earliest novel Disraeli makes his hero, who is himself, speak very disparagingly of the life of a barrister. The best prospects it holds out to a man, he says, if I remember rightly, is port and bad jokes till fifty, and then a peerage. Such a career may certainly not be very attractive to a genius with the aspirations of a Disraeli, but to men of lesser brains or lesser ambitions it is not without its charm—a charm which has fascinated generation after generation of the flower of the universities, and led hundreds to adopt a profession which in its turn too often leads to a life, such as another of Disraeli's heroes described, in which youth proves a blunder, manhood a struggle, old age a regret.

Perhaps I have overstated the charm of the Bar as a career. What attracts the ablest men to the Bar is not so much the career at the Bar as what that career may lead to. It is said that the Bar leads to anything, and that is true if we include the workhouse. But most of the ablest men who come to it regard success at it as merely the first step on the ladder of ambition, and, as we know, some of them climb from it to the topmost rung. But many men as able as these never get beyond the first step, and then they are as unhappy as those who have entirely failed. Many years ago I had a severe disappointment. One of my friends then was a man almost of genius, who had attained to the highest position but one in the legal world. He was dying, and from his deathbed he sent me a letter of sympathy. Life at the Bar, he said, even when apparently successful, was full of disappointments. "When I was your age," he added, "I never thought I was to die a mere lawyer."

Whatever the attraction that brings men to the Bar may be, it remains to-day as strong as ever it was. Before the war drove every young fellow worth his salt into the army, the number of candidates who presented themselves each year at the final examination for call came close on a thousand. Of this vast number about one-half came from India and the Crown Colonies. Most of those coming from India intended to practise at any rate till they got an appointment. Most of those coming from the Crown Colonies already held appointments, and were getting called merely for the purpose of more effectively discharging the duties of them, a grounding in practical law being found useful both as to their work and

as to their promotion. Many of the English students from India belonged to the same class.

And, strange as it may appear, at least half of the home students reading for the Bar have no intention of following the law as a profession. Thackeray, in 'Pendennis,' gives a description of the men who dined in Middle Temple Hall in his time. "Among the student class," he says, "there were gentlemen of all ages, from sixty to seventeen; stout grey-headed attornies who were proceeding to take the superior dignity,—dandies and men about town who wished for some reason to be barristers of seven years' standing,—swarthy black-eyed natives of the Colonies, who came to be called here before practising in their own islands—and many gentlemen of the Irish nation, who make a sojourn in Middle Temple Lane before they return to the green land of their birth." That description still applies, subject to one or two alterations. Gentlemen of the Irish nation now form a very small proportion of the students, and those there are have no intention of returning to the green land of their birth: the reason of this is that the rule which, in Thackeray's time, required men reading for the Irish Bar to keep four terms in England, has long been repealed. Again, the dandies and men about town who wish for some reason to be barristers of seven years' standing are no longer conspicuous among the students, if they are to be seen at all: the compulsory examinations have pretty well put a stop to their ambitions. But the places of both of these classes have been more than taken by civil servants, army officers, and medical men, who, like the officials from the Crown Colonies, find a practical grounding in law, and the evidence of that which is supplied by call to the Bar, very helpful both for practice and for promotion in their respective professions.

In England, till lately, law was the Cinderella of learning. The Universities neglected the teaching of it, and seemed to regard degrees in it as things to be given to deserving but uneducated persons. Thus, when a soap-boiler endowed a chair of something in stinks, the grateful University rewarded him with its LL.D. The authorities who did this would have been amazed if any one had proposed conferring a D.Lit. or D.Sc. on the benefactor, and, as for a D.D., they would have regarded the very suggestion to confer it as rank sacrilege; and yet the D.D. would seem the most appropriate, as these worthy people are usually regular churchgoers, and so the one learned subject they know something about is Divinity. This practice no doubt is due to the fact that the ancient Universities are situated far from the capital, which is the seat and centre of the living law; and even now the men who teach law at them are separated almost altogether

from its practice. The Inns of Court, when they were a school of law, were a school of practical law. That position they are trying now to regain; and that they are not trying in vain is shown by the fact that so many men in different professions, where a knowledge of practical law is useful, come to them to get it.

These, however, are not the gentlemen with whom we are at present concerned. We are dealing with those students who study with the object, as Thackeray says, of "mastering that enormous legend of the law, which they propose to gain their livelihood by expounding." If that legend of the law was enormous in Thackeray's time, it is still more enormous to-day. Every year the multitude of reports becomes more multitudinous; every year Parliament produces, as his royal patron told Gibbon he did, "another d—d big book"; and the unfortunate student who proposes to gain his livelihood by expounding the law must acquire some sort of a knowledge of all these. When Roman law had got into the same state, Justinian immortalised himself by making an orderly collection of excerpts from the legal treatises (which corresponded to our reports), and an orderly collection of constitutions (which corresponded to our statutes), and then enacting that all the rest of the treatises and constitutions should be burnt. The sooner something of the same kind is done in England the better.

But the important thing is the burning. Without it all attempts to codify branches of law by consolidating statutes are worse than useless. No sooner does a case arise on a new statute than somebody or other is sure to raise the question whether the new statute was intended to alter the old law or not; and so the only effect of the codifying is that the lawyer must master not merely the law as stated in the statute, but the law as stated in the reports. Besides, it usually occurs that the statute is so badly drafted that it is the terror of students. It seems incredible, but still it is the commonest of occurrences, to find text-writers, in commenting on a new Act, stating that it is impossible to know its effect until it has been interpreted by the court. Sometimes the interpretation is beyond even the court's powers. It was, I think, Chief Baron O'Grady who had to confess to a jury that he could not understand a new Act dealing with sheep-stealing. He had read it over and over again, he said dejectedly, and the only thing in it that was clear to him was that when a sheep was stolen somebody or something was to be hanged; but for the life of him he could not make out whether it was the man who stole the sheep or the man that owned the sheep or the sheep itself.

Assuming that the student has acquired sufficient knowledge of this enormous legend of the law to pass his call-examination, and so become

entitled to try to gain his livelihood by expounding it, he has various courses open to him. He may join the Old Bailey mess and North or South London Sessions (as they are now called), and look out for criminal work; or he may try his fortune at the Common Law Bar, joining a circuit and "opening" as many sessions on it as he can work; or he may settle down to conveyancing and equity work. All three have their attractions and their drawbacks. The criminal way is usually the quickest and always the cheapest road to practice, and now a commencement in it often leads to good civil work. A man going that way has not necessarily to read in chambers, nor has he the expenses of circuit life. Commencing at the common law is more pleasant, but also slower and more expensive. There the beginner must learn in chambers to master the practical use of what he has learned from his books, and is likely to have to bear heavy expenses going circuit before he gains any fees worth mentioning there. Chancery is to the beginner the hardest way of the law, but probably in the end the most certain. He has, even more necessarily than the common law man, to read in chambers; and the work he first gets is now the most wearisome and the worst paid of all legal work — conveyancing; but if he persists long enough he is pretty sure to get court work too, which is well paid, and of all legal work the most clean and intellectual. Which course, then, a young man just called should choose depends partly on his purse and partly on his taste.

The common law, as might be expected, is the course which attracts most men who can afford it. A youngster with a few hundreds a year to spend can pass his first half-dozen years at the common law bar very pleasantly, calling each morning at his business chambers, where he usually finds there is nothing to do, lounging over to the High Court, where he can occupy his time watching other men do cases, taking notes of the cases for them, or occasionally "devilling" a case for a friend who is too busy to attend to it himself, and sometimes doing a little work on his own account at a county court. This is his life in town. In the country it is as pleasant. He goes four times a year to the county and borough sessions, which he has opened, where he is sure to get from time to time a "soup"—that is, a brief for an official prosecution—such briefs being distributed in rotation among the members of the session's mess; and he goes three times a year on circuit, where, though he may get no work, he gets much play and a little experience, and where, if he is a sociable fellow, he is certain to make friendships which will last his life.

Over thirty years ago I joined the Midland Circuit. The Midland mess was then

still a real mess—that is, the same men constituted the body of it throughout the circuit, save perhaps in Aylesbury and Birmingham, the beginning and the end. I still look back with pleasure on those days spent in court listening to and discussing with other briefless ones the cases our busier friends conducted; the nights spent at mess over jolly dinners, with their *Durnsny* and their still better *Pape Clement;* the morning walks along the banks of the Trent; the evening walks about the close of Lincoln's cathedral; and the grand nights with their jokes and laughter and song, good-humour, good fellowship, and good wine. Of all the junketings of those times, the ones I liked least were those at which the judges were present. I never felt quite comfortable in their lordships' company: not that they were unpleasant—quite the contrary—but somehow or other when I watched their demeanour towards the Bar I could not help thinking of Raphael, who, Milton tells us, is an "affable archangel." I have been a guest at Bar dinners in Ireland, both when the judges were entertained and when they were entertainers, and I never there had that thought. Their lordships appeared quite human, and even suggested to me the English judges of old, who, as I have stated, when on the bench never forgot they were judges, and never remembered it when they were not.

The favourite song sung on festive occasions on the Midland was John Peel, and I never hear it till this day but it "stirs my heart like a trumpet." The last time it reached my ears was one night on the Lido of Venice in the year before the war. I had been spending the day in the city, and returned very late to the Hotel des Bains. As I was leaving the next morning for Bologna, on going to my bedroom I went out on my balcony to have a farewell look at the Adriatic. Above me a great Italian moon filled the still warm air with light, below me the sea shimmered like a lake of quicksilver, and away on my left the white summits of the Julian Alps stood up like spear-heads against the purple sky. As I looked about me a pleasant English voice began from a neighbouring balcony to sing that old hunting song, and immediately I forgot the moonlight and the Adriatic and the Alps, and was once more back at my first grand night dinner on the Midland: we were at Nottingham, that song was being sung, and the whole mess was joining in the chorus. How I remembered it all! And how I remembered that, after dinner and song were over, I went with two other youngsters to have a stroll in the historic market-place: it was such a night as this—with a glorious moon flooding the great square with light—and as we rambled along the dark arcades we talked of our hopes and prospects on the circuit. The two men who that night

walked with me are long dead, and their hopes and prospects lie in their graves with them; and as for me, well, I have not seen Nottingham for twenty years, and never again shall I in its market-place go aroving and adreaming "by the light o' the moon."

> O singer of Persephone!
> In the dim meadows desolate
> Dost thou remember Sicily?

But it must not be assumed that all is milk and honey in the land of the law, even on circuit: there are sure to be one or two objectionable persons in the mess. In my time there were several, and the worst of them was a certain young gentleman who might have been inoffensive but for the fact that his father was made a judge; and from the date of that event onward he could not talk for five minutes without referring to it. His father was one of the feeblest beings who ever contrived to climb on the Bench; but I should be sorry to hold him guilty of all the imbecile views on law, literature, and politics with which his son charged him. At last the son's constant citation of his father's authority for his own foolishness got on my nerves, and I told him his father should never have been made a judge, which was true, but was neither polite nor politic, and led to a coolness between the son and me. It would have been much better if I could have dealt with him as Lord Morris dealt with the son of a Baron of the Exchequer Court, who suffered from the same weakness. One night this young gentleman referred to "my father, the Baron," so often that Lord Morris was driven to desperation. "Dicky dear, Dicky dear," he said at last with deep pathos, "I wish to heavens your mother had been barren too."

Young common law barristers may think that I am, like that Emperor of the East of old, whom Lord Kenyon used to call Julian the Apostle, so absorbed in a state of things which is past that I have forgotten the state of things which is present. This is not the case: I merely like best to write about what I know best; and I know very much better how things on circuit were thirty years ago than how they are in this same year of grace. But I should say that younger men belonging now to circuits assure me that the old *camaraderie* of circuiteers is long gone. Few counsel, they tell me, now go to more than one or two towns on their circuit; and few, when they do go, stay more than one or two days. This they blame on the county courts and the railways. The county courts, by creating constant work of a kind for juniors living in the country, have created that institution detested by the ancients, the local Bar. The members of a local Bar look to the county courts chiefly for their livelihood; the assizes are merely occasional events which give them an opportunity of doing a little High Court work, and they seldom

attend them elsewhere than in the town in which they reside: as for work in London, it only comes in the shape of appeals from the assizes or county courts, and is like angels' visits, very welcome but very rare. Moreover, county court practice, which, as I have said, is the local Bar's mainstay, is outside the circuit system: any barrister may hold a brief at any county court; so it happens that members of a local Bar on one circuit constantly meet at county courts barristers of another circuit, and so the homogeneity of circuits is destroyed. Added to this, the county courts have now absorbed so much of the work which was once done at the assizes, and the local Bar has absorbed so much of the assize work which is still done there, that it is hardly worth the while of the London men who once formed the band of brothers who went the whole circuit to go beyond the particular district in which their connections lie; so most of them content themselves with running by train from town to each of those districts, waiting till the briefs are delivered (which is but one day), and if they receive none, returning immediately by train to town. Thus it happens that the London men are largely a different set in each assize town, and that seldom any reasonable number of them dine at mess for more than one or two nights, while the local men, having their homes in the assize town, seldom dine at mess at all. And so we get to this state of things, that after the first night or two of the assizes in a great town like Birmingham, you may find only half a dozen men at mess, scarcely one of whom knows intimately any one of the others. I speak now of what I have heard, not of what I have seen.

The pleasures and sorrows of circuit life, whatever they may be, are not for the man who goes to the Chancery side. He remains all his career in town. After a year or more of reading in chambers he settles in Lincoln's Inn, and enters himself in the Law List as an equity draftsman and conveyancer. The first work that comes to him is conveyancing, which, I have already said, is the worst paid and most wearisome of legal work. Lord Bowen, after a year at it, entertained such a horror of it that he would go out of his way in order not to pass the chambers where he had laboured so painfully. It was not thus always. Formerly there were many conveyancers who refused to enter court, and a very agreeable life they led once they became accustomed to their work. But then solicitors sent them what is called common form conveyancing—that is, conveyancing which your clerk can do for you out of any book of common forms. Now none of that comes counsel's way. When conveyancing comes now it is because it is so difficult that the solicitor himself will not run the risk of doing it, and thereby undoing himself; for

the solicitor is liable in damages for his mistakes, which counsel is not. And while the conveyancing which comes to counsel is now always difficult, the fees paid for it are smaller than they were when most of it was easy. But still young counsel must take conveyancing if they want court work, and when they get court work they are well rewarded for their drudgery over the conveyancing: it is well paid, clean, and intellectual. Probably no man in any profession earns his livelihood in a pleasanter way for a man of mind and of refinement than a Chancery junior in large practice. The matters he has to deal with usually are points of law with little dispute as to the facts, and little ill-feeling between the parties. The Chancery leader's work is not the same: now it is much liker the work of a Common Law leader than formerly, as they are generally retained only in witness actions.

The chief drawback of the Chancery Bar is the paucity of appointments open to its members. It has, indeed, at least its fair share of the High Court Judgeships, but it has few of those minor appointments which are the only ones open to the bulk of the profession. The consequence is that nine out of ten Chancery men have all their lives to look to practice for their livelihood, and though a man, if he can persist long enough, is pretty certain to secure enough practice to provide a livelihood, as a rule that livelihood is laboriously earned, and is not over generous. The Common Law and Criminal men, on the other hand, can look to scores of such minor appointments as recorders, stipendiary magistrates, county court judges, and what not.

Talking of counsels' fees, those earned by even the most successful men, either at the Chancery or Common Law Bars, are not nearly so enormous in the bulk as people think or say. One hears of a fashionable leader receiving briefs marked a thousand or two thousand guineas. This sounds by itself tremendous; but such briefs are not knocking at any man's door every day, and when they come they mean many a day's work. One can easily see by the estates left by judges and counsel that great fortunes are seldom made by them; very often what a distinguished counsel leaves behind him is less than that left by his own butcher or baker. Of all the barristers of my time, few were more successful, and none were keener after fees, than the late Sir Henry Hawkins. His chase after guineas brought on him the historic rebuke of Serjeant Ballantine, who reminded him that he could not take them with him when he died, and if he could they would melt. (By the way, his lordship was so fond of heat that he made his court to the counsel practising in it a perfect inferno in the summer—for other reasons it was not very different all the year round—and he hated draughts so much that it is said on respectable authority

that when he was being put into the furnace to be cremated, he was heard to murmur, "Shut that door: there's a draught.") He was regarded as having acquired an immense fortune, and yet when he died he left only about two hundred thousand pounds, which would be thought nothing of if he had been a successful coal merchant. It is true that at one time practice in Indian appeals to the Privy Council—where, as the saying was, you would not wink at a solicitor for less than ten guineas—and before Parliamentary Committees—long known as the Golden Gallery—brought large incomes to leaders; but unless rumour lies worse than usual, little money is made there now.

Disraeli, in his remark on life at the Bar with which this paper opens, talks of a peerage at fifty. No doubt a good many very successful lawyers do win a peerage about that age, but nowadays it is usually merely a life peerage, or if it is a hereditary one, that is because the winner has no heirs. This is because of what I have just mentioned—the fact that few lawyers by the exercise of their profession acquire large wealth, or even wealth enough to support a peerage in their family without leaving the younger children penniless. Nearly every lawyer of my time who, having sons living, accepted a hereditary peerage, had wealth coming from other sources than the law.

In concluding these rambling notes, I am reminded of the art critic—he must surely have been a lawyer—who, when reviewing a picture of a man and his dog, wrote that the man wanted execution, and justice had not been done to the dog; and I cannot help thinking some readers may pass a similar judgment on these slight sketches of the Bench and Bar of England. If they do, all I can say is that I have tried my best within the narrow limits I assigned myself to paint them as they are; and if the painter has failed to execute the judges or do justice to the counsel, it is his misfortune and not his fault, as Lord Morris said about a short-sighted man who had kissed—in mistake for his wife, he said—a very ugly woman. His lordship added that if the woman had been very pretty he should have been inclined to hold that it was the man's fault and not his misfortune. The same might be said of me if I had set down any tint in malice; but that I have not done, though I have, I suppose, as many pet aversions as most people, and for as much or as little reason.

450 MILES TO FREEDOM.

BY CAPTAIN M. A. B. JOHNSTON and CAPTAIN K. D. YEARSLEY.

CHAPTER VII.

No. 2 was now allowed to lead the way, of which he said he knew every foot; but we had only just started when the course he took veered almost to due North. Cochrane, who was next to him, caught hold of his arm and told him we were not imbeciles, and the man then led us along a fair line of country bearing between S.S.W. and S. He informed us that we would come to water on that night's march after four hours, and that we would then halt. It was decided to leave affairs in his hands: if his plans were successful, well and good; if not, we would go our own way.

Not more than two hours later we came to a small stream where the peaceful shepherds wanted to halt for the night, but we insisted on proceeding. Finally we settled down to go to sleep on the side of a small valley at about 2.30 A.M. on August 13th. Nothing untoward happened till about 7 A.M., when suddenly there was a shout and shepherd No. 1 could be seen dashing down the hillside above us. He had been keeping watch, he said, but as events turned out it is more than likely that he had been signalling while we were asleep. As daylight appeared the eight of us had moved for better concealment to the bottom of what was seen to be a horse-shoe valley, and when the shout was heard we were lying there in a small nullah which was narrow and steep-sided.

On standing up, the first things we saw were two ragged-looking gendarmes, one of whom was dressed in a long tattered black coat, and had a black handkerchief tied pirate-wise round his head. Compared to the black-coated gentleman, the other was almost gaudily dressed in a very dirty old grey uniform and "Enveri" cap. What was more important than their dress, however, was the fact that we found ourselves looking at the muzzles of a rifle and revolver carried ready for trigger-pressing by Beau Brummel and his seedy-looking friend. These two gentlemen now came to the kneeling position for greater effect.

The shepherds were greatly agitated: but whether their excitement was due to fear or the anticipation of more loot we cannot say. They told us to close up towards the rifle muzzle, which was remarkably steady and enfiladed the length of the nullah; so we all bunched up. It is very hard to remember what one thinks about on these occasions: perhaps the reason is that one does not think of much. One wants

something to happen and the suspense to end, the "Come on! get done with it quickly" sort of feeling.

Our two old friends now tried to show that they were not really fond of us. They made threatening gestures, and when Grunt moved to pick up his hat shepherd No. 1 hit him a terrific blow on the side of the head with a thick and heavy stick. Grunt was stunned, and had a bad gash on the right ear, but he soon came round or there would have been a free fight.

Fortunately the stick had been very dry and had snapped at the force of the blow, otherwise without a doubt Grunt's skull would have been broken. We put iodine on the wound and bound it up with lint and bandages, and in a few minutes he was discussing matters with the new folk.

Beau Brummel said he was a sergeant of gendarmes; his companion had failed to reach the exalted rank of N.C.O. They now produced rope, and, to add insult to injury, they produced it out of our own packs. Two of us were bound together at the elbows, back to back; the rest round the wrists with their hands behind them.

The sergeant then started talking—we need not say lying. He was going to take us back to his regiment. He wanted to know where we were going, and we broadly mentioned the Mediterranean. He thought we were men who had escaped from some camp on the railway, and it took long to convince him that we were officers from Yozgad. How had we managed to escape? We pointed out to him that a Turkish sentry is so overworked that his only time for sleep is on sentry duty. At this he had enough sense of humour to smile. He was curious as to the route taken by the others who had escaped the same night as ourselves: had we told him he would no doubt have called on them too, so we merely said we had not seen any of them since we left Yozgad.

Finally the whole point of the story was reached, and we started talking business. We had felt for some time that the conversation was veering in that direction, but these delicate situations have to be very carefully handled; so we left it to him to open the subject. He led up to his proposition by asking whether we would prefer to be recaptured or to go to our "memlikat" (home): we need hardly say what was our reply. He then wished to know what money we possessed, and with moderate truth we told him. As already mentioned, we had started each with at least thirty Turkish pounds in paper in addition to some gold; this, then, with the exception of the sums No. 1 and No. 2 had already received from us, and a little we had fortunately concealed in odd places in our clothing, he now took from our pockets.

He seemed quite pleased with his takings, as indeed he should have been with such a windfall, and was graciously pleased to signify that he

would now let us go. As we were supposed to be penniless, we pointed out that we had yet many miles to the coast and would need to buy provisions on the way: unless, therefore, he left us with some money we should still have to give ourselves up. Upon this he magnanimously gave us back a bunch of small notes, to the value of about seven Turkish pounds.

For the same reason he prevented our quondam guides from helping themselves to the essentials contained in our packs; for by this time they had opened them and were enviously fingering our spare boots and clothing. Instead of being allowed to make off with further loot, therefore, they had now to undo our bonds; after this they went away under the escort of the black-coated gentleman. He being a representative of Turkish law, could make his own selection of a souvenir of this happy occasion, and his choice fell on Johnny's fez. This was to prove a great loss, and on future occasions when fezes were the order of the day, Johnny had to wear a khaki handkerchief tied round his head, like the wounded hero.

Beau Brummel himself remained behind for a friendly chat. He advised us to make as quickly as possible for the Chichek Dagh to our south, lest the peaceful shepherds should again get on to our tracks and hand us over to further brigands. By this time he was quite frank. If we did this, he said, he would undertake to look after them for the next four hours. (No doubt he also took care of any money they still had on them.)

As we prepared to take his advice he remarked that we were soldiers and he had been one too, and that we were therefore friends. He then went off, waving his hand and saying, instead of the usual Turkish valediction, "Adieu." That brigand had more of the sportsman in him than any Turk we had previously met.

The moment the brigands were out of sight we moved away over the head of the valley in the opposite direction, and keeping a little west of south, marched for an hour, taking it in turns to carry Grunt's pack. We saw a fairly good hiding-place in a small ravine. It was a question of halting and taking the risk of being caught again by the brigands, or moving on and being almost certainly seen by fresh people; so we decided to stop. The time was half-past ten.

Let us quote from a diary written that day. "It is now 1.30 P.M., and no one has asked for money for four hours, so things look brighter. The clouds are getting up, which is a godsend, as our last night's water-bottle will probably have to do us for many hours more. The position is this: we are bound to go by the southern route, as we have thrown away a lot of food. We have no guide, thank goodness. We have already had to bribe four people, and there is not

much bribing power left. We are likely to be very thirsty in the near future. In fact, in appreciating the situation it cannot in any sense be called a hopeful one. Nevertheless, we are still free men!"

During the day we made a chargal to replace one which leaked. For this purpose we had brought along the sleeves of a waterproof coat, the remainder of which had been left in the cave when we reduced loads. Boots, too, in some cases, already needed repairs.

Towards evening Grunt's ear was again bathed and dressed. As dusk came on Cochrane and Nobby went off to look for water near a small grove of trees a quarter of a mile away. Here they found a patch of cultivation, and there was probably water in the vicinity; but so many people were about that the two had to come back without having found any. We had therefore to trust to finding water while on the march. We started at 8.30 P.M., when the moon was up, keeping in the shadow of the hills which ran along the edge of the valley containing the cultivated patch. After going a mile we saw some damp green grass, and a short way farther on we came to a four-feet square pool of an average depth of an inch. The water gave out a most horrible stench, and must have been the last summer resort of the cattle and buffaloes of the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, we were very glad to drink it and fill our water-bottles, though a second mugful nearly made us sick, and we each had to eat a few sultanas to take away the taste. That drink is not a pleasant memory.

Over the rise at the end of the valley we came to good going, and finally reached a road running in the right direction. Our luck, however, did not take us very far, as a short distance ahead was a village where we could hear men talking and dogs barking. To avoid the village we made a long detour to the east and soon found ourselves in the middle of numerous steep and rocky ravines. Unable to get back to the road owing to the nature of the country, we were forced to bear to the left or east, and spent the whole night going up and down the features of the mountain that had been pointed out to us that morning by Beau Brummel.

As already mentioned, this range is called Chichek Dagh, or Flower Mountain, the oak-scrub with which it is covered being in Turkey a near enough approach to flowers to give it that name. On this night we made our first acquaintance with sheep-dogs. Shortly after midnight we heard one barking not far ahead of us, and the tinkle of bells, so we again sheered off a little. The dog, however, was not going to miss a really good opportunity of barking, and it came nearer and nearer in the darkness, making an almost deafening noise. The sheep-dogs are the only ones in Turkey that are well treated; some of them are

magnificent animals and ugly customers to meet, especially at night. The brute finally stopped ten yards short of us, and as we moved hastily on he sped us on our way with a series of roars.

Half an hour later, to counteract our general depression due to the events of the last few days and to the heart-breaking country we were traversing, Cochrane found a spring of good water. He had suddenly turned off to the right, saying he smelt it, and sure enough before we had gone fifty yards we came on a spring. Here we had a huge drink and got rid of the putrid water in our water-bottles.

On this march we found that if we drank enormous quantities of water—in fact, if we forced ourselves to drink more than we wanted—we could carry on like a camel for a long time without a drink when the need arose. It may here be said, though a digression, that the fact about camels going for many days without water only holds good if they are trained to it. A friend of ours—a colonel in a Gurkha regiment—had told us that in the attempt to reach Gordon at Khartoum the camels with the relieving force were marched for a few days along the Nile and were watered twice daily. They naturally became used to drinking only a little at a time, and when they were suddenly taken across the desert it needed but two or three days without water to kill most of them.

We moved on from the spring in very much better spirits. At 2.30 A.M. we rested for an hour till daylight, for we were now at the summit of the range, and might only involve ourselves in unnecessary difficulties if we went on without being able to see the country. Sleep, however, was impossible. It was exasperating, indeed, to find that by night it was too cold to sleep, and too hot by day. It seemed there was some truth in the saying—

"As a rule a man's a fool;
When it's hot he wants it cool,
When it's cool he wants it hot,—
Always wanting what is not."

At daylight we marched on for another two and a half hours. The whole mountain range was covered with the oak-scrub, which practically hid us as we walked along the bed of a valley. At 6 A.M. we turned up a small ravine off the main valley we were in, and hid in pairs in the scrub. As we climbed to our hiding-places we disturbed a pair of huge eagle-owls. With these birds we were acquainted at Yozgad. "Patters," one of the naturalists with whom Johnny went out that Sunday morning, had kept a tame one. Whilst out hunting he had found a nest in a precipice, and, with the aid of a rope and two assistants, had managed to reach it. The nest contained two baby owls, one of which he brought back to the camp with him. It was at that time only a week old, and merely the size of a fowl, but

in a few weeks it became a fine upstanding bird, guaranteed to implant terror within the most resolute breast. At the age of three weeks it would swallow with consummate skill any dead sparrow that might be thrown to it: nothing remained to tell the tale except a few straggling feathers attached to his majesty's beak and a satisfied leer in his eyes. Mice, of course, were as easy for him to gulp down as sugar-coated pills would be to a sword-swallower. One day the youngster and a full-grown gander were placed face to face a few feet apart. Panic-stricken, they eyed each other for a few breathless seconds, then both turned tail and fled.

But to return to our story. While in hiding in the scrub we did not dare to move, though it was agony lying at a steep angle, one's hip on a pointed rock. We hardly spoke a word all day, which was very creditable; but none of us had any desire to be caught again by brigands. By reason of the cover it afforded the Flower Mountain was obviously very suitable for what the Turk calls a "Haidood." From this word, which means "outlaw," we coined an expressive adjective, and were wont to talk of a "haidood-ish" bit of country. Towards sunset we felt justified in having been so cautious, for we saw five armed men driving half a dozen cows over the crest of an opposite ridge, and the haste with which they were moving made it seem very probable that they were cattle-lifting.

We left our hiding-place about 7 P.M. and retraced our steps down the valley to a pool where we had seen a little water in the morning. On reaching it we found that nothing remained except some moist earth trampled by cattle, a herd of which must have been there during our absence. An hour after sunset we were back again at the foot of the slope where we had hidden all day, and now commenced a long march. It took us two and a half hours to get clear of the Chichek Dagh. It was very up and down, but fairly smooth going. After this the country opened up a little, but once again it became very difficult, with all the valleys running transversely to the southerly course we were steering. These valleys and two villages, to avoid which we had to make detours, cut down our speed in a useful direction to about one mile an hour. During the night we halted in order to get some sleep, but once more the cold was too great. Even during the five minutes' halts at the end of each hour we were chilled to the bone, and it was an effort to get moving again. On these short halts it was a waste of precious resting-time to remove our packs, though we had done this at the start. We now used to lie on our backs without taking anything off, and with our legs up a slight slope, so that the blood could run away from our feet. At 4 A.M. we resumed our

march, meaning to go on for the first hour of daylight, then to find a hiding-place and stop there. Unfortunately an hour's marching found us stranded in unpleasantly open cornland and surrounded by villages and harvesters working in the fields.

There was no hope of concealment, so we had to carry on. Coming over a rise, we found ourselves forced to march boldly through a village which, by the headgear of the women, we took to be Turcoman, though this part of Asia Minor is rather out of the Turcoman's beat. Along the road we passed scores of people, mostly women, riding on donkeys. Having once started, however, the only thing to do was to follow a track leading as much as possible in the desired direction, and to pretend to have some business there. Grunt, with his head bandaged, looked like a wounded soldier, and the rest of us might have looked soldiers of a sort.

On the far side of the village we marched across a broad valley, in which were more women working at the crops and some men tending cattle. After plodding on for four more hours, the last three in broad daylight, we at length reached a range of bare hills, at the foot of which we saw a dozen splendid wild geese, but these potential dinners flew leisurely away at our approach. Painfully climbing half-way up a rocky and winding ravine, we threw down our packs. We had started marching over thirteen hours before, and, except for one and a half hour's rest, had been on the move all the time, and we were very weary. Our daily ration had been about twelve ounces of food—not very much, when one was carrying a heavy load and marching many miles a day over mountainous country.

We made some cocoa; and when that was finished we boiled our mixture of rice, Oxo cubes, and sultanas, which for lack of water was very uncooked. On arriving at the ravine we had found a small tortoise; but while every one was busy making the cocoa, Master Tortoise disappeared, and though we hunted for him, with a view to adding him to the rice, we never saw him again.

This day we worked out a new distribution list for the extra biscuits, rice, and sultanas, which we had made into two packages in the cave for our two guides to carry for themselves. When our two friends had threatened not to come with us, these had been taken away from them and hurriedly distributed amongst the party; even when they afterwards did accompany us we had providentially kept these supplies in our own packs. Counting everything, we found that we had nine days' supply of food, on the basis of about twelve ounces a day each, and as there were still some 200 miles to go before reaching the coast, we realised that we should have

our work out out to get through. So far we had obtained no food from the country, though when we started we had hoped to do so. By now we were beginning to feel really hungry. For the first few days of the march the heat had taken away our appetites, but we were getting acclimatised, and the exhaustion of our reserve of strength made us feel the full effects of a reduced diet. At intervals we regretted having left nearly half our food behind in the cave. At the time we did so, however, it was the wisest course, and had we not reduced our loads it is certain we should not have been able to make the same progress.

A mile north of the range of hills in which we were hiding we had passed a line of telegraph poles, and what we had supposed to be a main road running east and west. This was in a very bad state of repair, but was evidently the road which our forty-year-old map informed us was only six miles from the Kizil Irmak. More than once we discovered that the map was a mine of misinformation. It is only fair to say, however, that the river in this part was shown in a dotted line, an admission that it had not been surveyed.

During the day one or two marmots came out of their holes to inspect us, standing up like picket pins the while, but without a trap they are very hard to catch. Looking up between the sides of the ravine, which were at least 300 feet high, we saw several vultures hovering over our heads. A few butterflies flitted about near us; and these were the only signs of life. Nevertheless it was not pleasant waiting there, as we had to do for nearly ten hours till darkness should come. We knew we had been seen by many people in the village and in the fields, and any gendarmes who might have been given news of our whereabouts would have ample time to catch us up.

CHAPTER VIII.

Shortly before sunset on August 15th we started to climb the ravine. This was a mile and a half long, and by the time we reached the top night had fallen. On our way up we had seen a stone that looked very like a bird; as one of us stooped to pick it up, the stone, to our great surprise, turned itself into a night-jar and fluttered away. The hills we now crossed were very rough and steep. At the bottom of the first valley to which we came we found a stream, by which we halted in the bright moonlight for a few minutes' rest and a drink. It was fortunate we were amongst some rushes, for suddenly three or four men rode by on donkeys not ten yards from us without seeing us. Later, on coming to a big nullah, we followed it, hoping that it

would lead us eventually to the Kizil Irmak, but by 3 A.M. we had tired of its winding course and took a more direct line to the south.

The wind was bitterly cold, and the only comfortable few minutes' halt we had that night was under the lee of a hayrick. At 5 A.M. we caught a glimpse of a big river six miles away; remembering, however, our enforced march of the previous morning, we decided to halt where we were without venturing farther. A shallow ditch, about two feet deep, was our hiding-place for the day. Here we found some straw, which proved a blessing. With it we obtained for our heads some sort of protection from the sun, but, despite the shelter, the heat entailed upon us a sleepless day. A bunch of straw, too, served as a cushion for our thinly-covered hip-bones. Later on in the day we used straws for drinking out of our water-bottles. It was a good scheme, for, by judiciously choosing a very thin stem, one had the satisfaction of drinking for minutes at a time without having expended more than a few drops of water.

The cold wind of the night had died down at dawn, but towards sunset a light breeze again sprang up, and this refreshed us greatly. We had been so sure of reaching the Kizil Irmak on the previous night that we had made no provision for water. By now, therefore, it was much needed, and we felt that when we did reach the river we would make a good effort to drink it dry. Some of us ate grasshoppers that day. The small nourishment they afforded did not make it worth our while to expend any energy in chasing them, but if one came to hand and allowed itself to be captured it was eaten. Opinion differed as to their succulence. Nobby stated they were like shrimps; Johnny noted in his diary that they were dry and rather bitter. To the general relief, Grunt's ear was beginning to heal; we had by now used nearly all our supply of iodine and bandages on it, and had it become poisoned Grunt would have had a very bad time.

It was not till nearly 10 P.M. that we reached the Kizil Irmak, and then only with great difficulty. The country was well populated, and many shepherds' huts and sheep-dogs barred our path. At one point we actually passed by the front door of a small house, outside which two men and their families were lying. The men sprang up in alarm at seeing eight extraordinary figures walk by, but we did not wait on the order of our going. Before reaching the river we came to a small stream where we drank our fill: then making several detours and walking as noiselessly as possible, we finally reached the bank of the Kizil Irmak. It was difficult in the moonlight to judge how broad it was: probably 300 yards across. But at that time of year half the bed was merely sandbanks, with a few trickles running through them. Taking off our boots and socks

we tied them round our necks; trousers were pulled up over our knees and we started off, hoping that we should find the main stream fordable. At the point where we stood the river was on a curve, and it was clear that the deep water would be on the opposite side. Walking along in single file we crossed in a direction slanting up-stream, and to our delight reached the other bank with the water only just above our waists. This bank was covered with reeds and difficult to climb.

The river water had been much warmer than the small streams we had passed, but now as we sat wet to the waist in the wind we soon became very cold; for it was a lengthy process wringing out our clothes and dressing on the steep bank where we remained so as not to be seen in the bright moonlight. Here we also washed our faces and brushed our teeth. When we started from Yozgad we had thought of the Kizil Irmak as the first definite mark in our journey, and though we had not crossed it as soon or in the same place as we had intended, yet we were across it, and one stage was successfully accomplished after nine days' march. As soon as all were dressed and ready, we again set off and, passing a gigantic and solitary rock near the bank, here running almost due N. and S., we went up a steady incline over prairie land. At 2 A.M. we halted and slept for two hours under the shelter of some small rocks. At daylight we crossed a valley which had been converging on the left with our course, and drank at a little pool on the farther side. This would have been a pleasant resting-place for the day: we could have lain and slept under the shade of the trees which ran the length of the valley, and we even saw a few blackberry bushes to tempt us; but there were signs of human activity in vegetable gardens around, so we went forward. Again it was a case of out of the frying-pan into the fire, as we soon came into open country that was cultivated and signally lacking in cover. Two men on a track we were about to cross stared very intently at us, but moved on. An old man on a donkey was ruder still; for not only did he stare at us, but he waited till we came up to him, and then without an introduction asked us where we were going and whence we had come. These questions were answered by Cochrane pointing vaguely to the south, and then to the north; and so we left him. At 6 A.M. we were momentarily out of sight of mankind in a shallow depression in the ground. It was overlooked by a hill to the north, but a glance over the next ridge showed us that we were half encircled by villages: we therefore stayed where we were. All day we must have been seen again and again by herd-boys and women on the hill, what time the sun beat down upon us from a cloudless

sky. Cooking a meal or tea was out of the question, and our 11 oz. of food that day consisted of two biscuits, 1 oz. of chocolate, and 4 oz. of sultanas. The last named are not only of excellent food value, but last a long while when eaten one at a time.

When we marched on at 7 P.M., thirst once again controlled our movements, and we spent over an hour in an anxious search for water. After visiting one clump of trees after another, we were at length rewarded by the discovery of a trickle feeding a small pool. The water moreover was sweet, and we felt that the refreshment of that drink was well worth the hour's search. Having filled chargals and water-bottles, we set off once more over easy rolling country, and within three hours were again drinking our fill at an unlooked-for spring. The moon set shortly after midnight, and coming soon afterwards to a deep reed-filled ditch, we thought it would best repay us to rest there till dawn should reveal what sort of country lay ahead. The icy wind which on the march had been a blessing, now threatened to be our bane. The nullah itself was sheltered, but it was marshy; so we lay down in a shallow but dry water-channel beyond, and obtained what sleep we could. It was, however, with little regret that at dawn next day we restored our frozen circulations by a brisk walk, the improving light having revealed the existence of a village close at hand. Making off into some low hills to the S.W., we proceeded to pick our way up a small valley, until at 5.30 we reached the head of a dry water-course. Here we settled down for the day. It was not an ideal hiding-place, but by this time we had ceased to expect one. We soon discovered a village track led by our lair a few yards above our heads. Along this would pass from time to time a country bullock-cart. The creak of the primitive axle revolving wood against wood within its rude socket was a noisy reminder, which we little needed, of the backward state of Turkey's civilisation. In view of the persistence of such anachronisms even in India, perhaps we should say it was a symbol of the stupid conservatism of the East. In addition to the unfortunate proximity of the road, our valley had the disadvantage of being itself the frequented path of cattle, a small herd of which came leisurely by not long after our arrival and showed more surprise at the strangers than did the two boys who followed them. We had seen water a little farther down the valley —mere puddles, it is true, but sufficient to justify our using a chargalful for cooking. It was not long, therefore, before a welcome half-mug of cocoa was being measured out, to be followed later by the standard mixture of rice, Oxo, and a few raisins. During the day most of us got more than the usual quota of sleep, for the cool wind still held.

At 5 P.M. our conversation, carried on now almost unconsciously in the low tones of the fugitive, suddenly broke forth into a more natural loudness; for two men had seen us from the road and were bearing down upon us. We had fortunately decided beforehand on a story containing a touch of local colour. Salutations over, the usual questions were asked as to where we had come from and what was our next objective. A Turk does not usually stop to inquire who you are; but this time we volunteered the information that we were German surveyors who had been engaged on fixing a site for a new bridge across the Kizil Irmak, and that we were now making our way to the railway at Eregli. The pair appeared satisfied, but put the question why we did not shelter from the heat in one of the villages round about. To this came the ready reply that one day we had done so, but had not been politely treated, so now we only entered when in need of food. We took the opportunity of finding out from our two callers the names of the various villages visible from the road above; unfortunately, none were marked on our forty-year-old map, so that this means of settling our position failed. However, we at least had the satisfaction of learning that there was a spring only a couple of hundred yards farther up the hill; in fact, when standing up we could see its stone trough.

Despite their apparent friendliness and the absence of any sign of suspicion, we were relieved to see our visitors depart; and having filled ourselves and our water-vessels at the spring, lost no time in moving on. We soon found that we were on the top of a small plateau, which to the east rose gently towards a low range of hills; while to the S. and S.W. the country fell away in a steep scarp. Below this stretched the desert plain, in the midst of which could be seen in the failing light the shimmer of the great salt lake. Even when we expected to have the guidance of the peaceful shepherds, this desert had not been a pleasant prospect; still less did we relish the thought now, after the troubles we had experienced in comparatively well-watered country. It was, however, a matter either of going on or giving up, so we went on. We had now been free men for eleven days.

The moon at this time served us for rather more than half of each night, so that even after sunset we could see the solitary peak of Hasan Dagh rising majestically over the plateau's edge to a height of several thousand feet above the plain. As we descended the scarp to our right we lost sight of this landmark; but our course was decided for us, since we soon found ourselves compelled to follow a gradually narrowing valley, and for three and a half hours were confined to a steep-sided gorge. A little before this a man mounted on a donkey, and accompanied by

a boy, had seen us, and to our disagreeable surprise turned and followed. We had shaken them off, when in the shadow of the gorge we saw a group of several men. It is hard to say whether they were more likely to have been brigands or fugitives like ourselves: one thing seemed certain, they had no business there. At any rate, they let us pass undisturbed, but the impression was forced upon us that this ravine we had entered was a death-trap, and when it veered more and more to the west we decided to make an attempt to get out of it. A clamber up the rocky southern slope, however, only revealed ridge after ridge and valley after valley between us and the plain, so we had perforce to go back into the ravine. Our relief was therefore great when at 1 A.M. the valley opened out, and we debouched on to the desert past a village.

Before we left Yozgad, Nobby had continually impressed upon the party the need of living as much as possible on the country. To aid us in this he had consulted with another naturalist, and prepared an elaborate list of somewhat uncommon but possible foods. Amongst them appeared tortoises, snails, frogs, snakes—these last were especially nutritious, stated this unique document—rodents, and grasshoppers. There were also notes regarding mushrooms, and how to distinguish them from poisonous toadstools. Tortoise we ate at Yozgad, not, we must hasten to add, because we were reduced to it by lack of better nourishment, but with a view to testing its edibility. It proved messy and uninteresting, but at least non-poisonous. We had, however, hardly come across any tortoises during our march, although we had seen many on the journey from Changri to Yozgad four months previously. In fact, the only item of the list we had sampled so far had been the grasshoppers. We had, of course, also placed considerable dependence on being able to eke out our meagre ration by plucking corn as we went along at night, intending either to boil or to parch it the next day. We had discovered that the Turkish soldiers did the latter very quickly and effectively by making a small fire of twigs, placing whole ears of corn on them, then adding more twigs on top. When the fire had died down they took out the corn and separated the grain by the simple process of rubbing it between the hands. Unfortunately for us, although we had passed a good deal of ready-cut crops, there never seemed to be enough grain inside to be worth the trouble of collecting.

On this particular night, however, Nobby was able for once to satisfy his predatory instincts by looting a couple of water-melons, for there was a bed of these outside the village we were now passing. These were cut up and divided out among the party without further ado, and eaten as we continued on our way. As a matter of fact, the melons were far from ripe; but even the

rind seemed too good to throw aside, for by this time we were ready to eat anything: but it did not tend to quench thirst, we found, so the rind was sacrificed.

The going was easier, and with one long halt of an hour and a half we plodded on steadily until 5 A.M. It was then, of course, daylight; and as a mile to our west there was a large town, boasting a rather fine-looking white tower, we resolved to lie up in a dry but grassy irrigation channel. A light haze covered the country, but in the direction opposite to the town we could just recognise Akserai built at the foot of the Hasan Dagh peak. Before us stretched the desert plain, bare except for an occasional nomad encampment; there seemed little sign of movement, even around the town near by. At 10 A.M., therefore, this 19th of August, we came to the conclusion that we might as well go on by day. We had practically no water, and if we were to be in the sun it was better to be on the march as well. The next water shown on our map was a river called the Beyaz Sou, or "White Stream," and thither we set forth, once more transformed into Germans by the simple expedient of replacing the fezes we had been wearing by Homburg hats or service dress caps, one or other of which each of the party carried for this very purpose.

In less than an hour we were glad to find ourselves nearing a stream, on the banks of which were a few reed huts and a vegetable patch with some more of those excellent water-melons. This time, however, there were not the same facilities for their removal, and, as we rather anticipated, their wild owners would not part with them, money or no. We therefore proceeded to the stream, which was perhaps a foot deep and twelve feet across. The paddle was refreshing to the feet; the water for drinking purposes less encouraging, for above us were cattle watering and the bottom was muddy. It belied its name of "White Stream," we thought, as we filled up our water-bottles. While doing this and wiping the mud off our feet, a villainous-looking cut-throat came out from a tent close by and drew near for a talk. We told the usual German story, and he asked for no details, but mentioned there was better water in a village farther on; we could see its grove of trees to our left front. Needless to say, however, on resuming our march we did not visit it, but kept due south over the scorched prairie land, varied here and there with a bit of plough. The heat was already terrific. At 1 P.M. we halted for an hour within a broken-down enclosure of large sun-dried blocks of mud. Two of these made an excellent fireplace for the dixie, while dry camel thorn and scrub provided fuel in abundance. We therefore cooked some rice and cocoa, which, although amounting to only half a mugful apiece, took some time to demolish, for in that temperature the food was long in cooling.

Here a dissertation upon

mugs. If an aluminium mug saves an ounce of weight, it makes a ton of trouble: and Looney's was thoroughly unpopular on account of its unpleasant habit of burning the fingers of any one who handled it. Moreover, it shared the failing of instability with Perce's empty ovaltine tin, which did duty for mug after his own had fallen out of his haversack on the very first night. Its small base was a source of anxiety both to its owner and the disher-out of brews. If you ever think of having all your food for a month or so out of a mug, let it be a squat enamelled one.

While we were eating our simple fare, a man passed ahead of us, but took no apparent notice of our little group.

We marched on at about 2 P.M., having as our next objective Mousa Kouyousou, *i.e.*, the Well of Moses: aptly named we thought, for the parched plain before us would need a Moses' wand to make it bring forth water. No tree oasis round this well was to help us in our quest; the map itself wrote the name vaguely across the desert without committing itself to any definite spot. All we could say from the map was that the well should be almost due west of Hasan Dagh. In that case we ought to find it within eighteen miles of the Beyaz Sou, and that as we imagined was now five or six miles behind us. An hour later we unexpectedly came upon a couple of small irrigation canals, at the first of which we halted a few minutes to bathe our scorched feet. The heat and glare of the desert were indeed overpowering; mirage seemed to raise the southern end of the Touz Cheul—the Salt Lake—above the level of the plain, and mocked us with the vision of an arm of water stretching out eastwards at right angles to our course, until we began to wonder where we could best cross it. As we proceeded, however, it became clear that this was in reality but the broad white bed of a dried-up river. A horrible suspicion now grew in our minds that here was the real Beyaz Sou, and that the muddy stream and two canals we had crossed were merely its diverted waters. Our surmise was soon confirmed, for, as we drew near, we were able to see far away to the S.E. a hump-backed bridge of some antiquity, now standing high and dry. This meant that those eighteen miles to the Well of Moses were still before us. On the far bank of the old river-bed could be seen a few huts, apparently deserted, while a little farther on, and to the west, stood an old khan or inn which eventually turned out to be in ruins. It was possible, however, that a well might be found there, so we decided to go rather out of our way on the off-chance. We amused ourselves by estimating how long it would take to reach it. The most pessimistic view was twenty minutes, but from the time of the guess we were on the march for a full hour before we finally reached that khan: so much for distance-judging in the desert. It was now 5.30

P.M., and we were soon peering down into the depths of two wells, obviously long disused, but which might still perhaps contain a little water. As it happened one of them did, and Cochrane lowered a mug. All he succeeded in drawing up were a few putrid dregs, in which floated some decomposed cockroaches—to Nobby's disgust especially; for it was his mug. Prospects were not very bright: Moses' Well, if it existed at all, was still something over twelve miles distant, and if we marched on at night it would be the easiest thing in the world to miss it in the darkness.

At length the sun set, and as the air became cooler our spirits revived a little, and we made up our minds that we would carry on for only part of the night, so as to be short of the well when daylight appeared. 7 o'clock accordingly saw us once more on the march; the going remained good, although the country was becoming rather more undulating. There were still the little fields of dusty plough in the midst of otherwise hopeless desolation. After a couple of hours we took our long halt on the edge of one of those ploughed patches. Nobby, wiser than the remainder of the party, dug himself a shallow trench in the loose soil, and so slept for five happy hours undisturbed by the cold which woke the rest; for we seemed to live in extremes of temperature.

Dawn on the 20th August found us very anxious. Having marched for another two hours or more, we felt that the well must be somewhere near. As the light grew stronger, we crossed a couple of steep rocky nullahs, and looking back, saw that we had passed not far from a village in a group of trees. A minute later two stunted trees ahead caught our eye, and we thought there might be water here, but were disappointed. By six o'clock we were seriously thinking of going back to the village behind us, when another came into view on our left. This time, however, there were no trees, and the huts seemed entirely deserted; but next moment our steps quickened as we recognised the stone circle of a well at the nearer end. As in other countries in the East, so in Turkey, water is often drawn up by bullocks: they are harnessed to a rope which, passing over a rude pulley supported directly over the mouth of the well, is attached to a large waterskin. The track beaten out by the patient beasts as they go to and from the well gives a measure of its depth. In the present instance, we could see by the length of the track that our well was a deep one; but it was comforting to find that the hoof-marks appeared fairly recent. So deep, indeed, was this well that no sound could be heard of the splash of a pebble which we dropped, but as the eyes became more accustomed to the dark depths, it was possible to recognise the sparkle of running water. Packs were off in a moment, and while Johnny and Grunt went on to see what they could find in the village, Coch-

rane joined up the heterogeneous collection of string and cord produced by the rest. There was still insufficient length, however, until we had added on a couple of strands unravelled from a skein of rope. Nobby's mug was then lowered, and we began filling our water-bottles and chargals. No drinks were to be allowed until this had been done — a wise precaution, for after a few mugfuls the string snapped, and poor old Nobby's mug was gone. Before long, however, a new line was made, this time all of strands from the rope, and a water-bottle was lowered, suitably weighted to make it enter the water mouth upwards. As soon as the supply was ensured, Ellis and Looney started a fire in a high stone enclosure near the village huts; for here it was possible to obtain a little shade from the already burning sun. Moreover, there was inside the enclosure a limitless supply of canes, placed there by some unwitting friend, and these, after weeks in the sun, were dry and burned admirably. Things were certainly beginning to look up, and we refreshed ourselves with a series of brews — cocoa, rice and Oxo, and tea — calculating with satisfaction that we had covered something over forty-four miles in the preceding thirty-five hours. Our contentment was temporarily disturbed, however, by the arrival of two men on donkeys — who with three or four boys now came into the village. Since they passed by the open side of our enclosure, we thought it best to call out the usual greeting, as though we were pleased to see them. To this they responded, and a few minutes later, having dismounted in the village, the two men came up, borrowed a brand from our fire, lit their cigarettes, and chatted pleasantly enough. The conversation turned, as often, on the subject of firearms, so we slapped our thighs in a knowing way, and left them to infer that we had revolvers. They seemed to take our presence as a matter of course, and asked no awkward questions as to what we were doing in such an out-of-the-way place. After a short rest they took their departure, and we thought no more about them.

CHAPTER IX.

An hour later, having refilled every water-carrying vessel, we too got under way. Scarcely had we gone three hundred yards from the well, however, when a rifle bullet whizzed over our heads and plunked into the higher ground some distance beyond. We stopped and turned, to find that we were followed by a party of five ruffians, two of whom we could see had rifles. Grunt shouted out to ask what they wanted, upon which they waved to us, as much as to imply that it was all a mistake and we could go on.

It is difficult to know what leads one to do certain things on such occasions: whether we were not inclined to allow so risky a mistake to pass unnoticed, or whether it was that we did not like to leave such doubtful characters in our rear; something at any rate induced us to find out more about them, so we began to walk back towards the well. To our surprise they too then began retreating, so six of us halted while Cochrane and Grunt approached them alone. Still, however, our friends seemed far from keen to make our nearer acquaintance—or rather we should say, renew it, for it was now possible to recognise amongst them the two who had ridden in on donkeys an hour before. This helped to explain their caution, for perhaps seeing our bold front, they thought it better to keep out of range of those revolvers of ours; at any rate they kept moving off as fast as Cochrane and Grunt advanced towards them. Even the armed men would not remain within shouting range, so that pourparlers were somewhat at a standstill. Some of the others were by this time getting in amongst the village houses where it was hard to see what they were up to. They might work round under cover, and so suddenly come in on the flank of our two envoys if they went back much farther towards the well. Cochrane therefore called a halt, and waited for the six behind to move up to some higher ground from which it would be easier to watch the opposing party. Some of these, however, even disappeared over the low ridge beyond the village, reappearing later reinforced by three more men. Meanwhile a period of stalemate ensued: our two envoys were not to be enticed into the village, still less would the enemy come any nearer. It must have been a full quarter of an hour that we stood there looking at one another.

At length, in reply to Grunt's repeated inquiries as to what they wanted, the nearest man started taking off his clothes, and made signs for us to do the same. This, at least, was plain acting if not plain speaking. Events now began to move much more rapidly. There was not much difficulty in deciding what to do, and in any case, on these occasions one acts almost intuitively. If we thought consciously at all, it was that though we were hardly in a position to dispute these men's demands, seeing that our revolvers were only imaginary, we could at any rate give them a run for their money—or, more accurately, for our clothes. To give them these without a struggle was tantamount to relinquishing once and for all what little hope remained of getting out of Turkey; it would further involve the very unpleasant, if not positively dangerous, experience of spending several days and nights in the friendless desert, with next to no clothes or food. Cochrane and Grunt, at any rate, did not hesitate for a moment, although for the last few minutes one of the armed

men had been covering them at a range of little over a hundred yards, and was sure to fire when they turned. And so it happened; but a sustained aim does not make for good shooting, and the shot went wide. The remaining six waited for the two to rejoin them, and then all of us, extending into skirmishing order, began a hasty retreat. The chances were not very equal: even if both sides had been unarmed, we were severely handicapped by our packs and water-bottles — a load of something over 25 lb. still. The two full chargals Johnny and Looney had to empty as they ran. Moreover, although by this time we were in hard enough training, we could scarcely expect to possess sufficient stamina for a protracted retirement; and if the ordinary villagers of this lawless countryside were in the habit of turning brigand on every favourable opportunity, we might have others joining in the chase when the first tired of it; a second village had already come into view. However, there was little time to be thinking of all these possibilities; we had the more immediate danger of being hit by one of our pursuers' bullets, for as soon as they had seen us take to flight they reopened fire. One of the rifles was obviously a Mauser, the other gave the impression of being rather an antiquated old blunderbuss; but it is not pleasant to stop even one of those comparatively slow-moving lumps of lead. Strangely enough, however, none of us felt afraid for his own safety: the chief fear of each was that some one else of the party might be hit, which would mean that all our plans of escape would have to go by the board, for we should naturally all have stayed with the wounded man. Providentially, the wild villagers' shooting was not very good, although one shot struck the ground between Nobby and Perce. At this stage we seriously considered the advisability of dropping one of our packs, in the hope that the Turks might delay their pursuit to look at their loot; but the suggestion was not entertained for more than a moment. So we carried on, doubling for a hundred yards in every three, for with these loads it was impossible to keep running continuously.

The shots were now beginning to follow one another at longer intervals, and looking back we found to our joy that we were actually outdistancing our pursuers. This seemed almost too good to be true, and we began to look round anxiously in case they might perhaps have something else in store. One armed man sent round on a pony or donkey would be enough to cut us off; we therefore kept a sharp look-out to right and left. No one, however, appeared, and after a precipitate flight of over two miles, and the creation, if there had been some one to time us, of a world's record for speed under novel conditions, we found that our pursuers had abandoned the chase. Probably

those imaginary revolvers of ours had still kept them in check, for we noticed that they followed us over each little rise with considerable circumspection, as though fearing we might be lying up for them.

We had come through with the loss of the water in the chargals and of Ellis's water-bottle. The latter had jumped out of its sling at the hottest stage of the pursuit, and had to be left where it fell. May its new owner find it always as empty as it seemed to be with us!

It was now about 12.20 P.M. and the heat at its worst. It was no time, however, to rest or even to slacken our pace more than we could help: and we did in fact carry on at well over four miles an hour until 2.30 P.M. Then seeing no further signs that we were followed we allowed ourselves a short halt. By this time, of course, our throats were parched with thirst, while our clothes were saturated with perspiration; but worst discomfort of all was the pain of our feet. The violent running and marching, the fiery heat of the sun above, and the radiation from the glowing earth beneath had combined to reduce them to bits of red-hot flesh, and we longed for water to cool them. But everywhere stretched the desert, dusty and bare, bordered by naked barren hills. To avoid approaching those immediately S. of us, we had latterly altered our course rather to the S.E.; for we were developing an unholy and not unnatural dread of brigands, and imagined that every hill was infested with them.

Not till 4.30 that evening did we dare to take more than a few minutes' rest. As we lay on the ground we scrutinised with deepest interest the Taurus Mountains, which, as the heat-haze lifted, stood out clearly ahead—the last great barrier to be overcome before we reached the sea. From a distance of about sixty miles it looked a level range, broken by no outstanding peak, pierced by no low-lying pass. Anywhere in the portion where we were likely to cross, however, the map indicated a height of not more than 5000 feet; so we turned our attention to nearer objects. In the next shallow valley we could see several flocks of sheep, or so we thought, and these we watched eagerly through our glasses, for their presence denoted water. We fancied we could see water a little beyond them, but when we reached the spot after dark we found that mirage had once again deceived us. It was not until we had marched another sixteen weary miles that our needs were to be met.

That night, the beginning of our third week of liberty, the strain of recent events and our anxiety for water were reflected in our tempers, and Cochrane had the thankless task of trying to keep the balance between those who demanded water on or off the nearest route, and those who howled for smooth-going for the sake of their agonised feet. A twentieth-century Solomon, he

kept the balance well; for the sore-feet brigade he had two hours over an ideal marching surface; then, in deference to the all-for-water party, two hours over stone-strewn ground at the foot of some low hills which held out the best prospect of finding the precious fluid. The search, however, was all in vain; for although we passed close above a village where there must have been water, we did not dare to seek the source of its supply. This night opium pills and "Kola" tablets were in great demand, but even those could not keep some of us going, and soon after midnight we took an hour's rest. A little before we had passed by an enormous flock of sheep: so disheartened were some of us that we very nearly decided to go up and ask the shepherd to show us the nearest water. This, however, Cochrane wisely decided not to risk. Instead, while the remainder lay down and rested, he left his pack and went off with Old Man to search for it. But their self-sacrifice was without result. After an hour's absence they rejoined the party, and we marched on, determined to make a last desperate effort to reach the Ak Gueul (White Lake) near Eregli. This was still fifteen miles or more away, and would, we knew, be salt; but it was the next water marked on our map. Just before we halted we had crossed a track, and along this we started off at something over four miles an hour. This pace, of course, could not have lasted, and providentially, an hour later, we were deterred from our purpose by the sound of more sheep bells. There must therefore be water somewhere in the neighbourhood. Though it was a pity to waste the moon, which was at its full and would only set an hour before dawn, we decided, after all, to wait the two hours which remained before daylight. We could then find out where the flocks were watered, and be fairly certain to find good concealment amongst the ridges of the Daradja Dagh, which was visible to the S.W. At this time we had, on the average, less than a pint of water a head.

Dawn on the 21st August found us huddled behind a couple of small rocks, seeking in vain for shelter from the cutting wind which was blowing harder every minute from the north. So chilled were we that another opium pill all round was voted a wise precaution. "Seeing red" is not an uncommon occurrence, but, owing to the opium, some of us that morning saw a green sunrise. In the valleys on either side were numerous flocks and herds; but no stream gladdened our straining eyes, nor could we recognise a well. There was no village in sight, so at six o'clock we determined to take the risk of passing the shepherds, whom we could see below, and to push on at all costs towards Eregli. We had moved down the S.W. slope of the hill for this purpose, and had gone a few hundred yards across the valley, when

we hit upon another Moses' Well, this time no less than 200 feet deep. With joy did we draw water out of that well of salvation, for such in the light of later events it proved to be. We were at the time within a few hundred yards of a large flock of sheep; but a rainstorm was brewing, and the shepherds were far too occupied with getting their sheep together to worry about our presence. We were thus able to fill up all water-vessels undisturbed, after which we went back to some broken-down stone enclosures which we had previously passed. One of these, about ten feet square, we reached at 8 A.M., having collected little twigs and dried weeds as we went. We now had concealment from view and a little shelter from the wind, but not from the rain, which soon began to fall and continued in heavy squalls until late in the afternoon. Every now and then the officer of the watch peeped over the wall to see that no one was approaching. That day, however, we saw nothing but the flocks and some men with camels, who came over the hills where we had been at dawn but did not come our way. At intervals we regaled ourselves with tea and brews of rice and cocoa, or rice and Oxo. Of rice we had almost a superfluity compared with other food, owing to the number of days on which we had been unable to cook. But the hot food and drink did not suffice to keep us warm, so that every shower left us shivering like aspen leaves. Even opium proved no longer effectual, though probably to it and to liberal doses of quinine is attributable the fact that none of us suffered from chill or fever after our exposure on that day.

Late that afternoon the sun appeared for a time, enabling most of us to snatch a little sleep. This was what we needed more than anything else. Much refreshed, we left our rude shelter at 6 P.M., and hurriedly refilling our water-bottles at the well, continued across the valley. Within an hour we were lying at the top of the low ridge on its southern side. From here we overlooked the bare plain stretching to the marshes near Eregli, and thought we saw the reflection of water in the Ak Gueul. When six hours later, and after covering seventeen or eighteen miles, we reached the lake, it was to find that it was dry and that it had been only the white salt-encrusted basin that we had seen. There was nothing to do but carry on. Besides the need of water, to keep us moving an icy wind blew without respite upon our backs, making even the short hourly halts a misery. Secondly, we had on the previous day checked our food supply, and calculated we had only enough for another four days at the most. Meanwhile, there still remained the Taurus range to be crossed.

We therefore pushed ahead and were soon fighting our way through thick reeds. The struggle continued for two hours, and so exhausted us

that towards the end we had to halt for a few minutes and eat the biscuit which was part of the coming day's ration. When we renewed the battle, it was with the expectation of finding ourselves at any moment crossing the main line of railway between Karaman and Eregli. This, of course, had not been built when our map was made, but we judged it must be on our side of the foothills of the Taurus, to the nearest point of which we were now making in the hope of being hidden there by dawn. If the railway were guarded, as it had been at all bridges and culverts when we passed along it on our way to captivity more than two years before, our approach, we thought, would be well advertised by the crackling of the reeds. In many places these were as stiff as canes and as much as eight feet in height. Our only hope was that the sentries would be octogenarians, and be stupefied into inaction by the apparent charging of a whole herd of wild elephants.

At 4 A.M. we emerged from the reeds to find that the railway was not on our side of the nearest ridge. Dawn found us safely hidden in a deep and rocky ravine, preparing to spend our first day in the Taurus. The merciless north wind still sought us out—so much so indeed that even in the sun it was impossible to keep warm until close on midday. We had about half a bottleful apiece of water, and under these chilly conditions it would have been ample for the day. Unfortunately it was again essential to cook rice, as we could afford no more biscuits; so all the water had to be expended on boiling. To be precise, our day's ration consisted of one pint mugful of rice and Oxo each: liquid refreshment there was none.

Some of us felt half drunk for want of sleep, or perhaps as a reaction after the opium, when at dusk that evening we moved up to the top of the ravine; but our limbs were slightly rested. We were glad also to find that at sunset the icy wind had dropped for a while, and that the country ahead of us was a plateau with only slight undulations and a splendid marching surface. We now took a S.S.E. direction, for we had decided to make our way across the Taurus by the most direct route to the sea. At 8 P.M. we were settling down to our second five minutes' halt, when Looney caught the glint of steel rails to our left front, and a look through the glasses established the fact that we had reached the railway. No sentries or patrols appeared to be in sight, so we completed the usual hourly rest and then cut boldly across the line and gained some slightly more hilly country to the S.E. From here we saw a hut some way down the line, which may have been built for the use of sentries; but whether this was so or not had ceased to be of vital interest, for we were now safely across.

After only another hour's march all of us were beginning to feel much more fatigued than we had expected on setting out that evening, the

effects probably of lack of sleep and water. However it was, we now had another consultation as to the route we should attempt to follow to the coast. This time we came to the conclusion that it would be taking a very grave risk to go by the shortest way—for the following reason. In that direction the map showed difficult country and very little in the way of villages or likely places for water, so that, with the short rations now remaining, an accident, such as descending a ravine and finding no immediate way out again, or even a sprained ankle, might be disastrous to the whole party. We decided, therefore, if nothing else interfered, to go at first a little west of south, and later make our way across the Taurus where the mountains were lower, following the valley of the Sakara river down to the sea.

At 9.30 P.M. we agreed to halt and give ourselves a long sleep till midnight. Before the end of it most of us were sorry we had settled upon such a lengthy one, so chilled were we by the cold. While we were resting, a train rumbled by in the valley below, showing that we were still not far from the railway. On resuming our journey therefore, we kept among the low hills. An hour's fast marching brought us into sight of a village, round which we worked our way, and on the further outskirts were overjoyed to find a well. The water was about sixty feet down, and so cold that for all our thirst we could hardly drink a mugful each. We remained at the well for nearly three-quarters of an hour filling all our water-bottles and chargals. Now and again a dog barked, but no inhabitants put in an appearance, so that we had leisure to inspect a bed of Indian corn near by. Unfortunately we could only find a single cob. It was very young and tender, and most refreshing, as far as it went when divided between eight.

With our thirst quenched by the ice-cold water, we were able to maintain an average pace of three miles an hour until 4.30 next morning. The indefatigable Cochrane was even then for going on. Most of the party, however, were utterly exhausted; for though since leaving the well the surface had been passably good, the country had been on a slight incline, and intersected by a series of irrigation channels and natural nullahs, which all added to our fatigue. In one of the latter, then, we removed our kits, and collected little bits of dried thorn and scrub in readiness to make a fire as soon as it should be light enough to do so without risk of detection. We had marched sixteen or seventeen miles, though not all in the most useful direction. There was gladness, therefore, when the two cooks on duty announced that the first dixie-ful was ready: a mixture of rice and cocoa once more graced the menu. Cochrane, who had gone ahead to reconnoitre, had still not returned, and the rest began to be anxious

lest he should have been seen, or have come to grief in some way. After a while three volunteers went out to look for him, and eventually saw his head peering cautiously over a rock. He had been cut off from the nullah by the chance arrival of a shepherd, and had been biding his time till the latter should think fit to move to pastures new.

The sun was already hot, and its heat, although considerably relieved by the cool breeze, once more precluded the possibility of any real sleep. Nor could we forget our hunger. On this occasion we were rather extravagant with our water. We had two brews of rice and Oxo and one of tea; then we boiled our last two handfuls of rice with a little cocoa, and so had a rice mould to take along with us in the dixie and eat that evening. Unfortunately the cook, who shall be nameless, upset it, so that a fair proportion of grit became an unwelcome ingredient of the dish. Our lavishness in water knew no bounds when we proceeded to boil up half a mugful, in which we were all to shave. This was the first time we did so since leaving Yozgad sixteen days before, so that the two little safety-razor sets were given an arduous task that day: few of us succeeded in removing all the growth without the use of two of our spare blades. It was a long and painful performance, but most refreshing in its result, and, as it proved, a very timely return to comparative respectability.

During the morning we went once again into the problem of food. At dawn we had most of us been in favour of going into the next suitable village, and there boldly replenishing our supplies as Germans; but as we recovered a little from our over-fatigue, we agreed with Cochrane that we might still reach the coast in three days. On tabulating our total supplies, we found we should in this case be able to allow ourselves the following daily rations. For the rest of the day already begun, the rice, cocoa, and grit mould. For the second day, remnants of tapioca, beef-tea, and ovaltine, amounting in all to about $4\frac{3}{4}$ oz. per head; and chocolate, cocoa, and arrowroot, totalling perhaps $1\frac{3}{4}$ oz. per head. For the third day, there would remain for each member of the party one biscuit, 5 oz. of raisins, 1 oz. of chocolate; and, between the party as a whole, four tins of Horlick's malted milk tablets.

For emergencies after the third day nothing would be left, so that, if on reaching the sea we did not at once find a dhow or other boat, and that with provisions, we should still be lost. But man proposes, God disposes; and it is as well for man that it is so.

(To be continued.)

THE STORY OF OUR SUBMARINES.—II.

BY KLAXON.

ANTI-SUBMARINE WORK.

I.

BEFORE speaking of anti-submarine work, a very short description of the German submarine and its variations in type is advisable.

A U-boat is not unlike our ordinary patrol-type submarine. She varies in size and capabilities, but is generally a 16-knot (surface speed) boat, with two guns—a 4·1-inch and a 22-pdr., two bow and two stern torpedo-tubes, and about 800 tons surface displacement.

A U-B boat is a small patrol boat of about 500 tons surface displacement; one 4·1-inch or 22-pdr. gun, one stern and four bow torpedo-tubes, 13 knots surface speed. There is also a "Flanders" type U-B class, of 250 tons and 8½ knots speed. The latter class worked from Ostend and Zeebrugge.

A U-C boat is about 400 tons; one 22-pdr. gun, 12 knots speed, one stern and two bow torpedo-tubes. The Flanders type U-C's are of 180 tons and 7½ knots speed. All U-C's are primarily fitted for mine-laying.

The U cruisers are from 2000 to 3000 tons displacement, carry two 5·9-inch guns, have a speed of 16 knots, and in some cases are fitted as mine-layers, in addition to their torpedo equipment.

The number of slight divergencies from the main types is considerable. Boats were built in standardised groups, and, during the second half of the war, in great quantities. On November 11th, 1918, the position was, roughly, as follows: 200 submarines in German hands, commissioned or completing—135 (roughly) on the building slips. About 200 had been destroyed up to that date.

In 1918 the average number of German submarines at sea—in the Adriatic, Irish Sea, Channel, and North Sea—was (in the spring) 20, in October, 24. The number available for service—excluding Mediterranean boats, school boats, and boats out of date—was about 72; so that, roughly, one-third were kept at sea, and the remainder resting or repairing.

The medium-size German submarines are quite good-looking boats, but the German mind showed itself clearly in the U cruisers. It has been an axiom at sea since the days of the Vikings, that a thing that looks ugly isn't good seamanship. British submarines are better stream-lined than

German boats, and have generally a more "varminty" and clean-run look. The sight of a U cruiser in dry dock recalls to one's mind a pair of pictures once published in 'La Vie Parisienne'—a Paris weekly which has done as much to win the war as any other periodical. The first picture showed a "seventy-five" gun, and standing beside it a girl built on clearly thoroughbred lines, balancing a cartridge on her hand. The second was of a squat 11-inch howitzer, accompanied by 'La Vie's' interpretation of a homely German Frau clutching the great shell to her portly figure. The two pictures illustrate rather well the ideas of our own K-boat designers as compared with the mental state of the authors of the German submarine cruisers.

II.

It used to be a catchword of naval correspondents that "submarine cannot fight submarine." Well, it is true, and it isn't. What can be done is that one submarine submerged can torpedo another submarine on the surface: in which case submarine No. 2 is not really a submarine at the moment. Two submarines may meet and have a gun-action, with possible damage to one or both of them, and much entertainment to their crews; but in such a case neither boat would be acting as a submarine.

Throughout the war our boats have been on the look-out for, and ready to engage, any enemy submarines met with. We have had boats, in varying numbers, since the middle of 1915 engaged definitely in submarine-hunting—that is, those boats that could be spared from the all-important task of watching the Bight and its approaches. The anti-submarine boats we sent out simply proceeded to areas where, by inference or by "information received," U-boats might be expected to be working. The ordinary patrol boats on passage to and from their stations, or while watching at their stations for the coming of big ships, often met with U-boats, and naturally took the chances the gods gave them with gun, torpedo, stem, or whatever means seemed best at the moment.

Of course, the torpedo was the usual weapon used. A hit on a big ship, once the destroyer screen has been avoided, is comparatively easy; a hit on a U-boat is mighty difficult. The attacker is looking at his target with his eye (the top prism of the periscope) only a few inches above water-level. His view of the enemy, therefore, is confined to a square-looking conning-tower, with heavy "jumping wires" (sweep deflectors) running down from it to a low grey line of hull. It is therefore difficult to exactly estimate the enemy's speed or course, and the short time at the

attacker's disposal for deciding on his deflection and turning to bring his tubes to bear does not allow of an accurate calculation based on bearings of the passing target. In fact, it is usually a case of "make up your mind and shoot quick." In addition to the handicap of the target being small, there is the knowledge that one must be far more careful to show only a little of the periscope during the attack, as submarines are far more on the *qui vive* for periscopes than big ships are. For one thing, they know what a periscope looks like; and for another, they have more knowledge of what a torpedo can do against craft of small buoyancy.

The moral effect of the use of submarine against submarine was probably greater than the direct effect. It discouraged U-boats from coming to the surface to use their guns against merchant ships, and restricted them to their torpedo armament, which was of course limited. A U-boat on the surface had the same sensations as a man would have who fell overboard crossing the Indian Ocean, where the sharks are always keeping station astern of a ship: a feeling of impatience, and anxiety to get back to where he came from. As an instance, I will mention the case of U-81, who, while engaged in the congenial work of pumping shells into an English merchant ship, received two torpedoes amidships from "E 54," who had been following operations through her periscope since U-81 first rose to the surface. "E 54" picked up seven survivors, one of whom was the Captain. The latter officer was somewhat damaged by the explosions, and was in danger of drowning until "E 54's" First Lieutenant dived for him and brought him aboard. Another survivor was the Warrant Officer, who, on being taken below, sent a message by "E 54's" coxswain to Commander Raikes, to the effect that it was advisable to keep a good look-out and to submerge again soon, *as there was another U-boat diving near at hand.* Commander Raikes would no doubt have acted on the second part of this excellent advice had it not been necessary for him to assist the damaged steamer into harbour. If one once begins to quote cases, it is difficult to keep from irrelevance, but I must note here that at the moment of the sinking of U-81, the crew of the steamer very wisely had abandoned ship, and the change from a U-boat in full view to a ditto E boat took place so suddenly that there was a natural misunderstanding when "E 54" stood over to tow the boats back to their ship. The steamer's crew were living too fast in twenty minutes for the situation to be quite clear, and in view of their knowledge of the way in which certain U-boats had dealt with survivors, the fact that "E 54" had to actually chase the lifeboats is comprehensible.

The following is from re-

ports of captured U-boats men:—

"Several prisoners give clear evidence of the fear inspired by the possible presence of Allied submarines submerged when they themselves were on the surface. Besides the probable results of this method of attack, the apprehension of it constitutes a seriously demoralising influence."

From an officer:—

"We knew that for every boat we had working in an area, you had two looking for us."

The latter statement shows an error in the officer's calculations. The odds were very much the other way; but his error shows that moral effect goes for a good deal in war.

In actions between submarines, guns have also been used, as have rifles, pistols, and—at short range in the dark—verbal abuse; but no definite sinkings on either side can be traced to these causes. In our boats it was the rule to attack submerged, if possible—in the U-boats it was rare to find an inclination to pursue a gun-action to its logical end. A submarine, when badly hit, can refuse action at any time by diving. This, of course, forces the opponent left on the surface to dive also, as it would be unhealthy then to remain on the surface in that locality. Our submarines were always more lightly gunned than the U-boats. Few of them carried more than one small gun—and that one usually an anti-aircraft weapon. This was for two reasons. Firstly, our boats are meant for warship-destroying as opposed to commerce-destroying. The attacking of warships implies speed under water (one should have, roughly, at least half the speed of the class of ship one is after). Big guns are bad for steam-line, and therefore militate against high submerged speed. Secondly, we were supplying guns to Allies, our own Army, and to all our merchant ships and "mystery ships," and the submarines had to take their turn at the supply with the rest.

The British officer always had an inclination to use the ram if he got a chance. A submarine can ram almost anything, and still, as the U.S. Navy puts it, "Get away with it." Our boats have a ten-inch razor-edged cast-steel stem fitted to them for net-cutting and other purposes. They can also, by their system of compartments, stand damage forward to the extent of a crushed bow, as far back as the bow hydroplanes, with no great risk to themselves. Add to these things the delightful idea of being able to thoroughly damage your ship and to be praised instead of court-martialed for the action, and it is obvious that a number of attempts along this line have been made. There is no record of one having been successful to the extent of sinking an enemy, but in some cases U-boats were damaged in this way. A curious case of accidental ramming was that in which "E 50" (Lieutenant-Commander Michell), when diving near the N. Hinder Light-vessel, sighted a periscope close

aboard on the bow. A moment later the two boats collided heavily at 25 feet by gauge. "E 50's" Captain, deciding that the other boat was underneath him, put his hydroplanes "hard-to-dive," and flooded tanks with the idea of carrying the enemy to the bottom (at that point 180 feet away) and crushing him. The U-boat, however, broke away, and after showing her stern and conning-tower a moment on the surface, sank again. It was later discovered that the enemy got home damaged. "E 50" came out of the affair with the loss of her port-bow hydroplane and a few dents. On such an occasion, there is no time to inspect your own boat for damage before making up your mind if you should or should not instantly rise to the surface. It is a natural action to bring your own boat up as soon as possible, in case the chance of ever getting her up at all goes by. The Captain of "E 50" acted on the rule that a dead U-boat is a primary consideration, whatever one's natural inclinations may be; his crew, though not consulted, were in full agreement with him.

Again, I must quote an irrelevant incident. There were two of our submarines in the Heligoland Bight patrol, diving in adjacent areas. They both returned to harbour slightly damaged—one under the impression that, while diving at 55 feet, he had been run over by a surface vessel; the other reporting that, while diving at 25 feet, he had bumped over a submarine. On meeting in harbour they found the times of the mysterious collisions tallied to the minute.

In April 1915, the idea of using a fishing trawler as a decoy originated in the *Vulcan's* flotilla (C-class submarines)—based on Leith. The U-boats had been sinking our fishing-boats at their leisure, and it was clear that if a few U-boats were mysteriously lost on this duty, it would be a discouraging thought for the remainder. It must be remembered that a "missing" boat has a certain moral effect—a boat openly sunk by gun-fire, &c., serves only as an example for others to be more careful. If a certain duty or a certain area becomes unhealthy for U-boats without any explanation, it tends to make the enemy chary of sending boats out on similar work until the matter is cleared up. Hence the secretiveness of the Admiralty during the war on the losses of enemy submarines. Prisoners taken from U-boats were prevented from explaining to anybody how their boats were sunk. It may have been from humanity, or it may have been from the consideration that U-boat prisoners were usually communicative in a useful way, but orders were strict that as many prisoners as possible were to be saved from the water when U-boats were sunk.

The *Vulcan's* idea was of masterly simplicity. The U-boats found a fishing fleet easy prey; therefore a fishing fleet with a "catch" on it would get results. One trawler of each fleet was to tow, instead of a trawl, a C-class sub-

marine. The submarine would keep well submerged at the end of the hawser, and need not necessarily keep a periscope look-out, in view of the fact that the critical moment for her to slip tow (a tow can be slipped while submerged) would be notified to her by telephone from the trawler's bridge. Submarine "C 24" was the first to show that the theory worked out in practice.

It will be seen, however, that she did the work under a considerable handicap, and had the most aggravating experience a submarine can have—that of doing an attack with "something wrong with the works."

Lieutenant Taylor, in command, reported:—

"At 9.30 A.M., June 23rd, I heard a report which I took to be an explosive signal from trawler *Taranaki* to show my periscope, I being at 30 feet. I telephoned her for confirmation and got the answer, 'Submarine 1500 yards on port bow'; and then again, as trawler altered course, 'Submarine 1000 yards astern.'

"I gave the order to slip, but the slipping gear jammed in 'C 24.' I then told *Taranaki* to slip her end, which she did. I went ahead, helm hard a-starboard, to attack submarine astern. The boat immediately sank to 38 feet with 5° inclination, bow down. The trim then took some time to adjust, as I had at that time 100 fathoms of 3½-inch wire hawser, 100 fathom 8-inch coir hawser, and 100 fathom telephone cable hanging from the bows. Eventually sighted enemy's conning-tower 1000 yards off. Closed to 500 yards, manœuvred for beam shot, and fired 9.55 A.M. Torpedo hit enemy amidships. I then came to the surface and picked up 'U 40's' Captain. My propeller then refused to move, and it was found that there were 20 turns of telephone cable round the shaft . . ."

Lieut.-Commander Edwards (in trawler *Taranaki*) was, of course, ignorant of the fact that "C24" was somewhat hampered by these cables hanging at the bow:—

". . . 9.30 A.M., June 23rd.—Enemy submarine rose and fired a shot across my bows from 2000 yards range—shell burst 20 yards ahead—informed 'C 24' by telephone. 9.45: Slipped *Taranaki's* end of tow, as 'C 24's' slip had jammed. Got boat out to simulate abandoning ship and panic. Saw 'C 24's' periscope pass, attacking. 9.55: Observed torpedo run and explode under conning-tower of enemy. An officer and a petty officer the only survivors . . ."

Lieut.-Commander Dobson, in command of "C 27," has an abrupt and almost *blasé* report to make of his sinking of "U 23":—

"7.55 A.M., July 20th: Lieut. Cantlie in trawler *Princess Louise* telephoned to me that a hostile submarine was in sight 2000 yards on the port bow—telling me not to slip for a little while. Telephone then broke down [*It would—of course*].

"At 8 A.M. I heard the sound of shots falling on the water and decided to slip, which I did. Turned to starboard to get clear of trawler and came to 18 feet for a look. Closed enemy to 500 yards, and fired port tube at 8.12. As I fired I observed enemy start her engines, and torpedo missed astern. I shifted my deflection and fired the starboard tube. Torpedo hit the submarine just abaft the conning-tower. I blew main ballast tanks and picked up seven survivors (Captain, two officers, and four men). The weather being too bad to get in tow again, I returned to harbour."

Lieutenant Cantlie, in the trawler, reports:—

"7.55 A.M., July 20: Sighted hostile submarine three points on port bow, distant 2500 yards—informed 'C 27,' and told her not to slip yet. Hostile submarine steering across my

bows. 7.56: Enemy opened fire, apparently trying to hit trawler. Telephone to 'C 27' broke down. 8.3 A.M.: Tow slipped. Enemy fired about 7 shots altogether. Employed trawler's crew in hoisting out boat, rushing about the deck, and appearing to be in a panic. 8.10 A.M.: Observed 'C 27's' periscope on starboard quarter attacking enemy. 8.12 A.M.: Observed 'C 27' fire a torpedo, which missed astern. Cleared away starboard gun for action. Enemy opened fire again on trawler, and commenced turning to port. I opened fire with my starboard gun, hoisting white ensign at the main. At the same moment second torpedo hit just abaft enemy's conning-tower. Column of water and smoke rose about 80 feet high. As it cleared away 30 feet of bow of submarine at a large angle could be seen. . . ."

The success of this scheme of U-boat hunting depended, of course, entirely on the secrecy maintained as to its existence; it was therefore unfortunate that the prisoners from U-23 were allowed to mix with interned German civilians who were about to be repatriated—a mistake which was excusable in the midst of the general confusion caused in the authorities' minds by the change from peace to war. At that date the disposal of prisoners was out of the Admiralty's hands, and on this mistake being discovered, steps were taken that prisoners having secrets to tell should be prevented from telling them to Germany. The trawler scheme of hunting, however, had to be given up for some time.

In 1916 U-boats again became active against the fishing fleets on the Dogger, and C boats were again sent out to work with the trawlers. On August 28, "C 29" (Lieut. Schofield), while being towed submerged, struck a mine off the Humber and was lost with all hands. The method was continued for a few more trips, but the U-boats being by then too careful, it was abandoned before the end of the year.

There were eighteen German boats in all sunk by torpedoes from our submarines, while others were hit but were able to get home. I will try to imagine a typical case of submarine *v.* submarine, in order to give an idea of what lies behind the bare despatches of the victors.

III.

The E boat was working a "beat" ten miles to the north of the North Dogger Bank Lightship—a dull beat, too, as in 1918 the U-boat captains had long ago given up the idea of passing near lightships in surface trim. The patrol was not there for enemy submarine strafing, however. The E boat was a unit of the watching semicircle that dived eternally, from the Haaks Light off the Dutch coast to Horn's Reef off Jutland, watching for a cloud of smoke to the east that would tell of the coming of the High Sea Fleet. The boat had been on the billet two days, and had five more to wait before she started her run home to Harwich. She had spent the short spring night jogging about on the surface at six knots, charg-

ing her batteries, and at 4 A.M. she slowed up and slipped under. It was her thirtieth patrol trip, and she expected it to be as dull as most of the others had been; there was a kind of yawning, done-it-all-before air in the way the crew took her under that morning, that showed, besides good training, a familiarity with intricate mechanism that had developed into something approaching contempt. The boat settled to her day's dive at twenty feet, her periscope moving slowly along at a speed of about two knots, leaving a very faint rippling line on the smooth North Sea surface. The Captain swung the periscope round, wiped the eyepiece with a nominally clean chamois-leather pad, and then leaned back against the diving gauge, finishing the fag-end of a cigarette. It was still twilight in the world above him, and the bad light, combined with the fact that periscopes are very apt to "fog" for some minutes after diving, when the engines are still hot enough to make the air in the boat steamy, would prevent him seeing anything clearly for twenty minutes. It was a rule of his to keep the early morning periscope watch himself, as he believed that if anything exciting was going to happen it would always occur at dawn. Certainly, as far as U-boats go, his ideas were right, as a boat on passage is humanly liable to hold on to her surface speed, and trim as long as there is a hint of darkness left to protect her, and in submarine war it is the one that gets under earliest that lives longest.

The Captain took another look through the periscope, and saw the familiar level floor of the sea blending with the pink and grey of the dawn just as he had seen it on so many previous mornings. He looked forward along his boat and saw the sleeping forms of sailors all the way along the battery deck cloths till his eye was attracted by a pair of sea-boots that projected through the gap in the wardroom curtain. Those were his First Lieutenant's boots, and his First Lieutenant, he knew well, was snoring loudly beyond them. He threw his cigarette end impatiently down the periscope well and began slowly moving the heavy periscope round, shuffling around with it as he swept the clearing horizon. It seemed a silly thing to be keeping the morning watch, of all watches, when he had two young and lazy officers to work for him. Their eyes were younger than his, and his were more valuable to the country anyway. It seemed absurd that only he and four "diving hands" should be awake, while all the rest snored. Why should he, an experienced and skilled officer, be at work at half-past four on a dull morning? Why, when he was a junior Lieutenant . . . he straightened up from the eyepiece. . . .

"Call the First Lieutenant!"

An hour later the situation in the E boat was the same, except for the fact that a gloomy officer in a soiled

sweater and a pair of still more soiled grey flannel trousers plodded round the periscope pedestal, while a pair of stockinged feet showing through the curtain showed whither the Captain's train of thought had led him. The crew still dozed fore and aft the boat. At regular intervals the hydroplane motors buzzed noisily as a turn of the wheels corrected her depth; from right aft came the monotonous ticking of a main motor that slowly turned the port propeller and urged the boat lazily along. In the wardroom the Captain, supremely oblivious to a monotonous drip of leaking water from a seam directly over his outthrown left hand, was back in the days before the war, when the Berkeley Hounds had had three forty-five minute bursts in a day, and he had ridden all three on the same horse. In his dreams he seemed to hear the drumming of many horses' hoofs on the sloping pastures, and the clash and tinkle of stirrups touching as the crowded field fought for room at the first fence. Then he woke and lay propped on one elbow, with a leg thrown over the side of his bunk, while his heart missed two complete beats. He had not heard the order of "action stations" that came from the periscope position, but he knew well the only possible order that could send men rushing past him to man the bow tubes. He pulled his seaboots on as he sat up, then jumped down and covered the distance aft to the periscope in half a dozen swift strides. The First Lieutenant, his face alight with suppressed emotions, stepped clear and spoke: "Fritz—bow-on, I think—big one"—then dashed forward to superintend the men at the bow tubes. All along the boat a clatter and ring of metal on metal told of preparation for firing. Amidships a hiss and splutter of air showed that the beam tubes were flooding, till a spurt of water coincided with a sharp cry of "Tubes full, sir!" The Captain spoke into the voice-pipe at his side, and the ticking sound from the main motors rose to a steady hum. He lowered the periscope till the eyepiece was level with the deck, and stood drumming his fingers against the hoisting wires. The matter of seeing the tubes cleared away and of keeping the boat's trim right lay now with his officers. His head was to be concerned only with the attack and the shot. He alone would be to blame for a miss now, and he had too well-trained a staff for him to need to worry over any diving details during an attack. His brain was working outside the boat in the early sunshine, where a big and confident U-boat was bound out for her station in the Irish Sea. The enemy was heading straight at him, and he himself was crossing her bow from port to starboard, heading north. To get his bow tubes to bear meant a quick rush to the north to get to a fair range, and then a turn to port till his head was

south and the enemy ran across his sights. He was, in view of the glassy state of the sea, keeping his periscope out of sight as long as possible, and intended to keep the instrument lowered till, on his estimate of the U-boat's course and speed (gauged in his first rapid glance) and his submarine sixth sense, he had turned inwards from a point on his target's starboard bow. In sixty-five seconds from the first sighting of the enemy, peace and quiet reigned again in the E boat. Except for the occasional slight hiss and gurgle as a tube-vent was tested, there was no sign to tell that the whole boat was on a tiptoe of expectant emotion. Three minutes from his first order to increase speed he starboarded his helm and —still with his periscope lowered — began his turn through west to south. His hands fidgeted now on the taut hoisting wires before him, and every nerve in his body cried for a glance at the enemy just to check his mental estimate. His first glance when his turn was half through would show him whether he had judged rightly, or whether he had made a miscalculation which would be heavy on his soul till the end of his days. But his nerves were well in hand and his will strong; the repeater of the gyroscopic compass had ticked slowly round under his gaze until it showed 275° — a trifle north of west. Then the periscope rose with a sigh and a creak of straining wires. He stooped and pressed his eye to the instrument as it rose, waiting for the very earliest glimpse of the upper world. All along the boat the men leaned from their stations to watch, for they knew exactly what depended on the quick decision based on that first glimpse he had taken. To his eye the green flickering circle lightened, paled, and then changed to a clear pale-blue sky and a sparkling stretch of sea. He had hoisted the periscope trained to south-west by south, and his heart gave a jump in gratitude to the training that had given him brains to judge rightly. The U-boat — very near and big—with a little foaming line falling away from her bows, was sailing slowly across the periscope, and he winced as he saw on her bridge the little group of figures that seemed to be looking straight at his face. Instantly he lowered the periscope and forced himself — for he felt that he ought to whisper, in fear of his enemy hearing— to shout the order to "stand by bow tubes." A few seconds later he spoke again as the periscope rose — "Midships— steady on one eight-five—stop starboard."

As the surface view showed again he carefully jerked the great instrument a fraction round as he set it at his "deflection"—the angle of lead ahead of the enemy, based on a guess at her speed, that corresponds to the "swing in front" of a rabbit-shooter. Then he lowered his hands from the training-handles lest he should be tempted to move the instrument again, and with

the order to fire trembling on his lips, waited as the grey stem of the U-boat slid evenly into the view, and the conning-tower and the vertical spider-hair line that formed his actual sight drew together.

At the bow tubes three men and an officer crouched, the pulses of certainly one of them working at abnormal pressure. The actual firing of the tubes would come suddenly, electrically controlled by the Captain sixty feet away. *Thud!* the port bow torpedo left with a faint roar and rattle—*Thud!* the heavy ball of the starboard firing-gear came down decisively, and another "18-inch short range—high speed setting" went away on its last run. Two men by the tubes jerked up the vents to let the water rush back into the space that the torpedoes had left vacant, and each of the crouching group held his breath in agonising expectation. It was really only ten seconds (but it must have felt like a hundred) before the great question was answered: and the answer was savagely and brutally clear. A great clanging report shook the E boat, and the hull quivered as if she had lightly touched something forward. A torpedo man leaned across and closed the two spouting tube-vents, then looked aft and, grinning with relief, sang a pæan of victory along the glittering tunnel of the E boat —"*Wow!*" he said. "Good-bye-ee-ee!"

IV.

The sinking of U-C 65 by "C 15" (Lieutenant E. H. Dolphin) provides an odd case. There is a story behind the official despatch:—

"2.43 P.M.: Sighted enemy submarine on the surface five points on the port bow. Dived and flooded both tubes.

"3.12: Sighted submarine in periscope steering estimated course of N. 70 E, bearing 40° on starboard bow.

"3.15: Fired double shot at 400 yards—one torpedo hit—the other appeared to pass under.

"Submarine sank immediately—noise of explosion slight.

"3.17: Surface—picked up five survivors of U-C 65."

The position was about 25′ south of Beachy Head. "C 15" was on patrol in rather misty weather, and at the time of sighting the enemy both boats were on the surface, U-C 65 steering home up Channel, "C 15" steering N. by E. across her bows. Both boats saw each other at the same time, and the German watched the English boat go under to attack. The obvious reply was to either dive also or to alter course and pass round the "danger-radius" of the torpedoes on the surface. The German Captain had two mental handicaps—over-confidence and (having just finished a long trip) over-anxiety to get home on leave. He decided not to alter course or delay his passage, but explained to his First Lieutenant that it was quite easy to dodge a torpedo if a good

look-out was kept and the helm moved quickly. The First Lieutenant appears to have had philosophic doubts as to the wisdom of the proceeding, his doubting being justified when, on seeing the firing-splash as "C 15" fired, the Captain neatly dodged one torpedo and received the other fairly amidships. Lieutenant Dolphin had fired two—"spread" slightly for deflection; not having "declared to win" with either, the question of which one hit did not trouble him. U-C 65 probably won a moral victory, but—"C 15" sank her.

The C boats working round the N. Hinder Light-vessel were liable to make sudden "contacts" with the enemy, usually in thick weather or at night. Both sides would be trying to make the light-ship to fix their positions, and on occasions two belligerent submarines would make the lightship together.

On March 1st, 1917, "C 19" (Lieutenant A. C. Bennett) was steering east from the Hinder Light, when she sighted (by moonlight) a small submarine right ahead steering straight at her. "C 19" decided that this looked like another British G boat, several of which were in the vicinity. Each boat turned to north and flashed a challenge. The German then made I.M.I. (the Morse signal to "repeat" common knowledge to all nations). The boats were them beam to beam at 100 yards' range, and the German hailed in his own language. "C 19" had no gun, and was trying to swing round to bring the bow tubes to bear, having no doubt as to what to do in the matter. The enemy continued to make I.M.I., and turned away to get out of the line of fire. This made it a stern-chase with "C 19" close up and gaining; the German then fired a star-shell, and "C 19" replied with rifles and automatic pistols. That was too much for the Hun; he kicked his tail up and dived, with the bullets smacking on his conning-tower as he went, and "C 19's" starboard torpedo—fired as he dived—racing over the top of him. The U-boat's periscope shewed once on the bow, and "C 19" turned to ram and passed over it, without, unfortunately, hitting anything solid. "C 19," on the 5th March, met another Flanders Flotilla boat, this time with a heavy sea running, which prevented torpedoes being fired with any hope of accuracy. The C boat charged at once, using rifles and pistols as she came in. The enemy dived, and "C 19" passed over her, the bump being slightly felt below. It is possible that the German's periscope was damaged, but he saved his skin by getting under in time.

On the 14th May 1917, in thick weather, "C 6" (Lieutenant Brookes) was feeling for the Hinder Light-vessel. She found it at 7.30 A.M. close aboard, and at the same time a German submarine found it, and, appearing 300 yards away, dived at once. "C 6" went under also and pursued by the use of hydrophones. In

about half an hour the enemy's motors were heard to slow up and stop, and "C 6," thinking he had gone to the bottom to avoid the chase, came to the surface to get the mast down, as it had been left standing in the hurry of getting under. The visibility was only 200 yards, and there was nothing in sight. "C 6" dived again, and, as she did so, heard the rattle and hum of propellers as a torpedo missed her over the top. The German had evidently come up for a look instead of taking bottom. The exasperated "C 6" pursued by hydrophone for another quarter of an hour, but the sound of the enemy's motors was then lost.

The list of "Contacts" with enemy submarines shows that in seven cases the enemy was sunk less than five miles from a headland or navigational mark. When proceeding between mine-fields, or when bound for dangerous waters, it is natural for submarines to get a good departure or landfall if posible, but all such strategic points are unhealthy to approach. The following two cases illustrate this. In each of them the U-boat Captain closed a light in order to get a good navigational departure, and in each case his precaution had fatal results:—

On the 5th April 1917, "C 7" (Lieutenant A. W. Forbes) was waiting at the Schouwen Bank gas-buoy, watching the channel that led to Zeebrugge. She lay on the surface with half-buoyancy, and was undoubtedly, as can be guessed from the despatch, on the "top-line" in the matter of being ready for action. Lieutenant Forbes' First Lieutenant was on the sick-list most of the trip, so that he himself was pretty well worn out on his return to harbour by continual watch-keeping and anxiety.

"3.32 A.M.: Sighted submarine on port quarter steering about north, distant 400 yards. Turned and at once fired port torpedo at a range of about 250 yards. Torpedo hit forward with loud explosion, sending up a large column of water. Submarine turned to port and sank in a few seconds. The night was very dark and misty, and no survivors or debris could be seen."

In "E 52's" (Lieutenant P. Phillips) case, U-C 63 was caught as she passed a well-known light-buoy north of the Dover Net Barrage. "E 52" (with her conning-tower only showing) attacked so as to keep the enemy against the moonlight. The only survivor was a Petty Officer, who gave the following account:—

"The night being very cold, the Navigating Warrant Officer, who was on watch, sent the A.B. below to get some coffee. In the meantime the engineer of the boat came on the bridge and stood talking to the officer of the watch, who, in consequence, failed to keep a proper look-out. The Petty Officer himself, chancing to look to port, suddenly saw a submarine on the surface. . . . U-C 63 had just started to turn when she was struck by a torpedo amidships."

And that survivor's statement would be a good thing to frame and put on every ship's bridge in war-time!

The critical time when a bad look-out was being kept could not have been more than a few seconds, but it was long enough to cause death to all but one of the submarine's crew.

The U-boats during the war torpedoed four of our boats, viz.: "E 20" in the Sea of Marmora in November 1915, "E 22" in April 1916 off Yarmouth, "C 34" off the Shetlands in July of 1917, and "D 6" in the Channel in June of 1918. Of these, "C 34" was hit when almost under—the German U-52 firing at the top of his conning-tower as it went down. "E 22" was attacked while beating up and down waiting for orders to proceed to any threatened area on the day of the Yarmouth raid. She saw U-B 18's periscope and tried to ram it, actually bending down the enemy's bow "net-cutter" (the big steel saw that stands up in the bows of U-boats). The German, however, passed under her and got his torpedo in as she turned back.

As far as is known, none of our boats were sunk by enemy submarines apart from the four named. On several occasions U-boats fired torpedoes and used guns against our boats, but the low hulls of English submarines provide very small targets. I suppose the majority of shells fired at English submarines came from English guns. Certainly the boats were far more nervous about approaching our own harbours than they were of working in enemy waters. The shooting was usually wild and could be treated as amusing, but on occasions fatal results precluded any joking. The surface anti-submarine vessels drew no fine distinctions, and the submarines at times used to deplore their own side's excessive zeal. There is a short extract from a certain boat's signal-log which begins, "Can you give me my position?" and which continues, punctuated by nine rounds of gun-fire, by way of injured protests, to "What did you do in the Great War, Daddy?" as, her identity established and the patrol ship's attentions deflected, the submarine continued her way up harbour.

Out on the patrol areas, however, a British boat diving had to stand her chance. No surface ship could be expected to differentiate between our own and enemy periscopes, and the potency of British depth charges was highly spoken of by those of our boats that had experience of them.

OUR LAND DAYS.

BY E. S. WILKINSON.

XIV.—"LOOKING BACK."

WITH your hand on the plough, neither tradition nor practical experience allows you to look back; but after you have loosed out your horses for the last time, and left your plough on the headland for another to follow, then after a little time you will find yourself perforce looking back and remembering. For myself, when I am asked the plain question, "And did you really like your work on the land?" I find I cannot give a plain answer.

I would do it all again if the clock were suddenly put back to the day I started, and do it again still with the knowledge of what it means clear in my mind; but I cannot balance up the good days and bad, and the "plain" jobs and the "right" jobs, and boil it all down to a simple "Yes, I liked it," or "No, I didn't." Instead of that I will try here to put down a few impressions of days that remain in my mind, as clearly now as when I worked them through from the sun rising; and if you can read an answer in them, it might not be far wrong.

There's a day when I went to plough in a great 40-acre field that sloped up an open hillside on the wolds.

The furrow was a long one, and it took a quarter of an hour to go once up and down. We had six other teams ploughing, and a fine mist lying about us. Half the field was always hidden in mist, and the other teams kept vanishing into it up the hill beyond me, or appearing suddenly as they came ploughing back on the downward furrow. Away in the mist you could hear a ploughboy whistling a tune, breaking off sometimes with a low "Who-arve, Boxer!" or "Come on, my lads!" and then slipping back to his tune, with the accompaniment of the jingle of the plough-traces, and the sound of the coulter cutting through the seed-land as the furrow turned over clean from the plough. And all the day round our heads the sea-gulls wheeled and cried,—all the length of the furrow, before me and behind, they settled in a long white line, rising in waves in front of my horses' feet, only to settle again in the furrow I left behind me. At the time I was busy keeping my furrow straight and trying to improve the running of my plough, as I was not an old hand then, to get her "set right" all at once; but now, looking back, I can see the gulls in the mist again between my horses' heads and

hear the thud-thud of the team's feet on the soft earth.

Then there is a day in the blazing sun when I "quartered" across the side of a hill, with the land as hard as a rock, and a pair of horses that were not good plough horses at the best of times, — to an inexperienced plough-"boy" fiends incarnate. If I lost my temper for a second, through sheer heat and weariness, and flicked them with the line, for the next hour or so they tore backwards and forwards like maniacs. I had practically to run to keep pace, with the plough grinding and bumping along in the hard stony ground. It was, I think, the worst day I had. Away through a gap in the hills I could see in the distance another little range of hills near my own home. As the sun rose higher and hotter, the racing across the field became intolerable. I ached in every limb, and at last I was at the end of my tether. It was touch and go. I nearly left plough and horses, and headed back to the gap in the hills and home. Perhaps it was so far that I thought I should never get there; anyway, I lay down in the hedge bottom instead, and remained there at least half an hour. What the farmer would have said if he found me, I neither knew nor cared; but he did not find me, and at last I recovered enough to carry on till night and crawl back. I think he does not know how nearly he lost his "third lad" that day, but it was indeed as near as that. Afterwards that day stood me in good stead, because it became a sort of standard for carrying on; and I find a little entry in my diary—"Low-water mark day. May 23rd."

I remember again a day when the foreman said, "You can go and break up yon heap." "Yon heap" had lain in the yard all winter, and looked harmless enough, but it was a "whited sepulchre." True, he told me it was to be manure for the turnip drill, and it wanted breaking up to mix bone manure into it; but there was innocent grass growing on top of it, and nothing in its appearance to warn me. I would, in the light of future events, have been thankful for a notice telling me to "Keep off *that* grass!" I attacked it with a shovel. There were about thirteen tons of it. After a bit a man came to join me. When he got into the yard, he laughed and said, "It seems to buzz a bit; I think I shall be wanting my pipe." "Yes," I said, "you will." Words fail me, and I cannot deal adequately with my subject: suffice it to say that the hens we found in it had been dead a long time!

By contrast there is a day when I went, with Sam and Jock and a roller, to roll spring corn. They were a handy pair those two. One could drive them "straight as a line," and as the day wore on we made green patterns on the young oats—lovely straight lines of

dark green and light. At the end of the field was a plantation full of beech-trees, and during that day I watched them burst into green. It is perfectly true that I saw the leaves growing on the trees. Where in the morning we had seen but a green shade on the brown, at night I said to Sam, "Aren't the beeches 'ripping'!" I think Sam only said, "Is there going to be a wurzel for tea?" but then he always made a point of pretending he was merely practical.

Back to my mind too comes a day in the depths of winter when Boots, and I, and Jack had to go up to the Home Farm to help to thresh. We had some bran to fetch, so we took "Cobbie" (one of Boots' horses) in a cart. Soon after we started it began to snow, and by about 9 A.M. a heavy storm was upon us, with a gale of wind. Threshing was out of the question, and by 11 o'clock it was clear that it was not going to stop in time for us to do any good that day.

Finally we decided to try and get back to our own farm for dinner. We had about a mile to go down a bleak open road, dead against wind and snow. We yoked up Cobbie, put on our overcoats, and started off, more or less cheered away by the other men, who knew it would be rough on t' top road. Rough indeed it was. We simply couldn't face it, or even speak. We stood in the cart with our backs to the wind and left it all to old Cobbie. We went plunging through the drifts till he reached the gate where the field-road to our farm turned off. There the drifts were so high that the road was impassable, and we had to head him out into the field. Finally we more or less tobogganed down the steep hill to the stackyard and reeled into the stable. Dan greeted us with "By lad, you'll a 'ad a rough ride!" At which we assured him that he could not believe what it was like up at the top. Stamping ourselves warm we gave Cobbie a good dinner, and stumbled across the yard to our own. The road was covered with drifts for a week, and I shall not easily forget the breathless fury of the driving snow that day.

There are countless other days and incidents which, when repeated, would perhaps not seem so fresh and vivid as they do to me. Why, there is even the important fact that we had bacon-cake for tea on Tuesdays, and sometimes Fridays as well, which is almost worth a chapter to itself. But I will not write it.

I will end with the little brown plovers that hatch out in the corn, and the young leverets that lie so close that one can almost hoe them. Poor plovers, their nesting-time is a bit of a struggle when they choose the tillage fields. Sam and I scruffled a field five times over with six nests in it, and five times we took the eggs out of each nest and put them back when we had passed. They are bad to see, though, when you have your work to watch as well, and the first I knew of one little nest was four squashed

eggs behind my roller. I hope the two poor birds tried a nest elsewhere later, and were not ruthlessly crushed again. They are fine birds, and full of pluck and cleverness when they want to protect their nests. I love the way they call, and the sound of their wings as they come tumbling round one's head. Skylarks, too, are part of work on the land—they sing best of all, I think, when one is working just beneath them. If it was all a question of skylarks when asked, "Did I like my work?" I could at once say "Yes!"

XV.—LABOURERS ALL.

Now I have come to the moment when I want to try and give a little account of the men I have worked with, and I find myself sitting pen in hand and unable to begin. I do not know that I can do justice to the friendliness of their spirit or the generosity of their help, and yet if I say too much they would accuse me of "nobbut talk"! I would like to answer the question so often asked: "How did you get on with the other men on the farm?" and I can only answer it by facts.

There were no "other" men, we were all labourers together. Once they knew that we were out to work, we were accepted as fellows, and helped at every turn; never laughed at for our mistakes and ignorance except in the friendliest way, and, best of all, not left in ignorance when a little of their knowledge was going to help to lighten our work. On a farm it is not really possible to do more than your own work. A day's work on the land is a day's work that demands, in nine cases out of ten, the greater part of your physical energy, and you cannot afford to rush your own job in order to help others with theirs. That is why Boots and I will always count amongst our best friends the men who did do this for us—men who, after hoeing all day, have towards evening hoed a little of our rows as well as their own, so that we could keep pace with the "gang." They were very likely only a little less tired than ourselves, and yet always on the look-out for some friendly turn to help us. I can't think that we have struck men different from other farm hands. Boots and I have worked with a great many different men at our various jobs, and it has always been the same. There is such a fine courtesy about their help too—never an implication of, "You see you couldn't do it till I showed you how!" It always was made to seem just chance that you were being helped. I have ploughed sometimes with seven or eight other ploughs going in the field, and to the casual passer-by I was getting on quite happily, but a man ploughing behind me has noticed some little thing about

the fall of my furrow, or the way my coulter cuts, that he thought he could improve for me. We plough on for a bit before he says anything, and then perhaps we are both cleaning our ploughs at the end together, and he'll say casually, "Yon plough o' yours seems to be running into t' land a bit—she used to be a good plough, mebbe she's gotten bent a bit ploughing a hedge bottom out." (Nothing to do with me, you see, just the plough to blame.) Then, "Tak' my horses a turn or two about, and I'll see if I can do owt with her," and in a short time I should get her back with, "I think she'll gang better now," and he'd explain he had altered something quite unique, when it was possibly some little thing I ought to have known.

Men who come of families who have worked for generations on the land naturally know every little detail of their work from real practical experience. They know the jobs that look heavy and are not really so bad, and the jobs that look easy and are not. It would be hard to blame them if sometimes they had let Boots and me take the job which we thought looked light, and find it out to our cost; but they did not do it. The longer we worked on the land the more we realised the little ways they had tried to make our work easier. I have carted "muck" for some days on end, with the whole "force" of the estate on the job. That sometimes meant eight or nine carts going, and perhaps four or five "standing fillers" in the fold-yard. All day long these men filled our carts as we came, in regular sequence, back empty from the field. They would get a little breathing-space sometimes, waiting for a cart to come in, and might use it to loosen some "muck" that was fast and binding the rest down. And then if I came in with my cart and old Jock, after I had backed him into place, a man would say quietly: "You come and fill here; it's nice and loose," and he would go off to another place where it took a bit more "riving" out. I wonder if he knows I knew he'd loosened it five minutes before. I wonder, too, if another man knows what Boots and I thought of him when, after a long day's loading hay, he had forked his last load before night up on to a high stack, and then proceeded to turn Boots off her waggon and fork that up too. I could add many another little item to the debt I owe them. It was the manner of it that was so fine. I've been to another farm to fetch corn, and a man says, "I'll just show you where it is," meaning he'll just loaden it up for me. Then there were friends at the railway station who, when we went for coal, found time to come and shovel a bit for us. And then through it all we had plenty of simple fun—ragging each other about our work, our horses, the forwardness of our crops com-

pared with others, the bits missed by the drill in seed-time, which you cannot wipe out till harvest, and particularly our turn-out of brasses when we had to go into the town, which made the waggoners on the other farms on the estate say they would not be seen on the road with us, because it made their harness look dingy!

It is not true that the farm-labourer is lacking in wit and intelligence, or that he is silent because he has nothing to say. His horizon may be limited by his work; he is so sadly lacking in time or opportunity to be interested in anything else. But is it a narrow horizon, bounded by the open sky? Is it an unintelligent job to till the earth? I believe he does not talk, because he knows that only those who have worked with him can understand, and with them there is no need to talk because of that understanding. His greatest fault may be that he recognises no other work but physical toil—but who should look down on him for that?

He takes the finest pride in his work, and he has a very deep confidence in himself. He has not yet been caught fast in the clutches of machinery, time-saving, and money-making. His clock is still, to all intents and purposes, the sun, and with his feet in the furrow and his hands on the plough, he is a freer man than the one who is earning enough to call half the day his own by grinding at a machine or in an office for the rest. The farm labourer does want more time to himself, and, above all, he wants a half day a week, and he means to get it. His work, I believe, is worth more than he is paid for it, though the war has done more for him than any amount of propaganda could have done in the same time. On the other hand, I sometimes wonder what is going to happen when farm work too is gripped by machinery on every side. What will become of the old traditions of work?

Are we gaining more than we lose, in these days of efficiency and the greatest amount of work for the least amount of time and cost? In gaining time are we gaining leisure? Is it not, within reason, better to work and be tired, and then sleep and rest? I am coming to believe that, with some adjustment of hours and conditions of labour, it is in places where hurry and bustle are of little avail that we shall in the end learn patience again and find content.

XVI.—CONCLUSION.

It is not possible for me to judge whether this account of my own experiences will be encouraging or the reverse. I have tried to make it a true record of what land work means, or at least what I personally found it. There

are hard and tedious jobs in plenty to be found, but there is much besides that, to me, has made them well worth while. Perhaps, to a certain extent, it is the fact of having learnt what a day's work means. At least one learns *how* to work. I think one of the chief difficulties about women's work on the land is that we will make such "heavy weather" of it.

We belong to two classes. The first class there is no need to write much about, and I hope there are not many of them. I mean those who come to work on the land because they think it is a novel thing to do, and because they like the uniform, and want to attract attention. They resent criticism, and fall back on the ridiculous and pathetic plea that: "After all I am only a woman, and what can you expect? I've tried to do my best and they won't have me, so I'll give it up." I have no sympathy for this class of land worker. I know so well the prejudices against the whole cause of women's labour that they have created in the minds of the farmers and farm-labourers! They have no right to tackle the job without the least intention of sticking to it, and they have no right to say they did not know it would be so hard! However, perhaps there are not many of these "fair weather" workers left now. I think there are not.

Then there is the second class, to which I should be glad to think that Boots and I belong. We are very ordinary people, who find that the only way to make life possible in these days is to put all our time and energy into work that we hope may be of some value. It is little enough that women as a whole can do when we are at war, except "carry on" in their own homes, and keep confident and cheery when the outlook is not very bright. But there are a fair proportion of us who have found it possible to plunge into fields of labour which are new and strange to women, and I think many people are surprised at the results. In fact I think we have surprised ourselves. You will gather from the first few chapters that I did not personally expect women's land work to succeed. Then the question arises, has it succeeded? And is it a branch of labour that may remain open to women at the end of the war? For myself I doubt it. Some of the dairy work and poultry farming taken up by women in the last two or three years may continue to be done by them, but the rough "all-weathers" work out in the fields, with horses and hoes and muck forks, has only arisen because of the war, and to my mind is only justified by the war. The real reason at the bottom of it is that it is unpractical to have a type of labour on the land which is not able to deal with every kind of work as it arises, and there certainly are quite a number of kinds of work on the land which are essentially not women's work. I don't say women cannot make some-

thing of them in an emergency —in fact I am sure they can; but there *is* a risk of strain attached to them. Also so many jobs on the land are team jobs, and that means that where one member of the team falls short of her share the work is heavier for the others. This is not calculated to make women's work popular in normal times, as the hours and work of the farm-labourer are long and arduous enough as it is. But then these are not "normal times," and it is up to us all to do all we can. If I am right, and there *is* a slight risk of over-strain attached to our work, may we not take that risk these days? There is no need to ask. It has already been taken. Up and down the country women are doing work they have not done before, and I believe everywhere they are justified by results.

On the land the corn has not refused to grow for us, or the stock to feed. My last word to any one new to the work is Dan's to me: "There's no need to kill yourself, just keep going 'steady away,' and you'll get more done by half." The keynote, indeed, of all good work: "Steady away."

AN ADMIRALTY FARM.

With apologies to those Officers at the Admiralty who, during the spring of 1916, spared no efforts to provide the ships of the White Sea Squadron with fresh meat.

I.

It was nearly midnight by the clock, but it was still broad daylight, and if there had been no clouds and no hills to the Northerd, the sun would have still been visible skimming along the top of the horizon. The "white nights," as the Russians call them, are not conducive to sleep, although in the mornings the inclination is more marked. Anyhow, there was no apparent intention of going to bed displayed by the small group of officers who were sitting in a circle round a fire in the wardroom of one of H.M. ships: they were discussing what appeared to them at the time a most important question.

They were all dressed in naval uniform, representatives of various ranks from a commander to a clerk, but if the same group had been assembled in July 1914, very few would have been in uniform. One had returned post-haste from a farm in British Columbia, one had been a land-agent in England, one had come from the gold-mines in South Africa, several had been officers in various lines of Steamship Companies, and the Law and the Joint-Stock Banks had supplied one or two of the others with a means of livelihood.

The conversation had rather drifted away from the point under discussion, tending to become frivolous, and the Commander was beginning to look rather harassed and worried.

"It's all very well for you fellows to joke about it," he said, "but I wish to Heaven you would pull yourselves together and help me to make out some answer to this telegram. I got it yesterday morning, and it's high time I sent an answer. Several of you are supposed to be agricultural experts, and I don't believe you know the first thing about it, or, if you do, you conceal it wonderfully well."

"I've rather forgotten what the telegram said," remarked the Canadian. "Read it out again, Clerk, and we'll try and help to make up some sort of a reply; but I wish to repeat once more that I know nothing about either sheep or cattle——"

"I thought you owned a farm in B.C." said one of the younger members of the R.N.R. in rather a surprised voice.

"Perhaps I do, but that doesn't say that I farm it. Maybe I was keeping it to sell to some young idiot from England who knew less about farming than I did," and the

Canadian looked rather pointedly at the last speaker.

"I'll read out the telegram," said the Clerk. He took up the paper lying by his side and read as follows:—

"*From the Admiralty, dated two days ago. . . . My Number so-and-so.*

"Report by telegram whether there is suitable accommodation for pasturing live stock at Forsakenskie for the use of H.M. ships during the summer months. State whether sheep or cattle, or both, should be sent, and in what numbers, and whether hay can be purchased locally."

"Surely we ought to be able to make up an answer to that," said the land-agent, "and I call it a very reasonable and sensible telegram to get from their lordships: shows how we're progressing as a nation when the Admiralty know that cattle eat hay without first referring to the Board of Agriculture."

"The Admiralty are pretty hot stuff in these days," remarked the Chief. "I suppose you heard about their three-word telegram to the poor old *Nonsuch* last winter when they had opened about their last case of provisions, and telegraphed to say they had run out of fresh water altogether, and hadn't enough coal left to distil?"

"No, what was that, Chief?" said several voices.

The answer was, "Snow will melt."

"I wish to goodness you wouldn't start these interruptions, Chief," said the Commander irritably; "we shall never get on. Now let's take the telegram bit by bit and write down an answer to each part, and then we can form it up into an intelligible reply. First of all, is there suitable pasturage or not?"

"You ought to be able to say that without any hesitation," he said, glaring at the land-agent, "after dragging me all round the country this afternoon on that visit of inspection."

"My dear old chap," said the land-agent rather scornfully, "the less said about that walk to-day the better. Apart from the fact that there was at least six inches of snow still left on the ground, I couldn't induce you to move out of the first Lap house you came to, though what the attraction was I couldn't see."

"I was trying to buy furs," said the Commander, "and it was obviously useless to walk about looking for pasturage in all that snow. Anyhow we saw a lot of reindeer, and they must eat something, so write down, Clerk. Your Number so-and-so, mine so-and-so. There is ample pasturage for live stock in the summer: stop!"

"I wouldn't say ample," said the Canadian cautiously.

"I wouldn't say pasturage," said the land-agent. "Reindeer eat moss."

"I wouldn't say live stock," said the Chief; "that means sheep and cattle."

"I wouldn't say there is ample in the summer," said the

Clerk. "I should say there will be."

I should say, "I hope there will be," remarked one of the more pessimistic of the R.N.R. lieutenants. "We don't know for certain that the snow will ever go, and it's June now."

"What the devil is the good of my suggesting anything if you are all going to pull it to pieces in this way?" said the Commander irritably. "Let's have a little more constructive, not destructive criticism—especially from you, Clerk," he added rather fiercely.

"I am sorry, sir," said the Clerk, "but shall I rewrite the sentence to fall in line with the suggestions these other officers have made?"

"Yes, go on," said the Commander.

After several minutes' delay the Clerk read out, "There will probably be food for animals in the autumn."

"Cross that out," said the Commander angrily. "I am not asked for an expression of opinion, but for a statement of fact. Write down, 'I am informed there is ample pasturage for stock in the summer.'"

"Who informed you?" demanded the land-agent rather anxiously. "Don't say I did and try and blame me when they all die of hunger."

"I told you, didn't I, that I was asking that Lap about it this afternoon when I was up in the village—or anyhow, if I didn't tell you, I was."

"I thought you were buying furs," remarked the Canadian.

The Commander treated this with contempt, and picking up the copy of the telegram, "Now as to sheep or cattle, or both—which do the experts advise?" he asked sarcastically.

"I prefer beef to mutton,' said the Chief, "so I votes for cattle."

"We aren't discussing beef *versus* mutton, Chief," said the land-agent. "It is improbable they will ever be eaten unless they are killed before they land. You can't eat things which die a natural death," he added fatuously.

"Hunger isn't a natural death," said the Commander drily. "But as I probably have to look forward to landing the brutes, I want to ask for the animals that will give me the least trouble."

"How are you going to land them?" asked one of the trawler officers. "Make them swim?"

"I suppose so," said the Commander. "Now which swim best, cattle or sheep?"

"Sheep can't swim," said the Clerk hastily, anxious to show his knowledge in matters agricultural. "They cut their throats when they try, so that quite settles it. We must have cattle, which I am very glad of, as I hate mutton."

"Am I likely to be disembarkation officer, sir?" inquired one of the R.N.R. officers rather anxiously.

"Certainly you are," said the Commander. "Why, what has that got to do with it?"

"Only that I strongly advise sheep, sir," said the disembarkation officer. "They are much easier to handle, and

they aren't nearly so strong, and they have no horns."

"Can sheep swim, or can't they? Can any of you experts tell me that? It must be a very easy thing to earn your living anyhow in these days if one can get hold of expert's jobs with such very little knowledge," said the Commander wearily.

"Yes, they can swim all right," said the land-agent, "and I expect you'll be asking to be taken on one day as my pupil after they retire you—which they are bound to do soon if you take as long as this answering a telegram."

"All right, we appear to be making some progress at last," said the Commander. "Now then, Clerk, cross out quadrupeds and put sheep, and read the telegram again."

"I didn't put quadrupeds, I put stock, sir," said the Clerk. "The Admiralty said live stock."

"Don't contradict, but read it out as I tell you, my good boy."

"The telegram now reads, 'I am informed there is ample pasturage for sheep in the summer,' said the Clerk, with a note of forbearance in his voice.

"Now then add, 'Only sheep should be sent, number to commence with'—what do you think, Pay?" asked the Commander.

"I don't know how much they'll weigh, sir," said the Paymaster thoughtfully. "I am only accustomed to dealing with them as mutton, not as sheep."

"How much do your sheep average?" asked the Chief, addressing the Canadian.

"I thought I had made it plain enough that I haven't got any sheep, and that I know nothing about them," said the Canadian irritably. "You'd better look it up in 'Chambers'."

"Get the Encyclopædia, Clerk," said the Commander, "and look up 'Sheep.'"

There was a lengthy pause while the right volume was got down from the shelf.

"It doesn't say anything about their weight," said the Clerk," but apparently there are several sorts of breeds. I wonder whether we ought to specify the breed. It says they are a docile animal."

"I should estimate a sheep to weigh about 50 lbs.," said the land-agent. "They'll probably weigh nearly that when first landed, and as to breed I should specify those most suitable for a rocky island, where the only food is moss and mosquitoes. I am getting rather tired of this, and am off to bed very soon," he added. "I've got to be off to sea early in the morning."

"For God's sake, hang on now and get this thing finished," said the Commander. "We are really making a little headway now; come on, Paymaster, how many sheep will keep us all going for, say, a month?"

After some moments of anxious calculation, the Paymaster announced 400.

"Rot," said the Commander. "I said a month, not a year."

"Well, sir, 700 men will eat

that number in a month, if you allow them fresh meat every day."

"Every day—certainly not," said the Commander. "Once a week is ample."

"Once a week is not enough," said the Doctor emphatically. "If we don't get it more often than that we shall have an outbreak of scurvy; I've been very anxious about it for the last three months."

"Will you take on disembarkation officer, Doc.?" asked the R.N.R. lieutenant anxiously. "Because if I'm to do it I hope you won't ask for more than a hundred, sir," he said, addressing the Commander.

"Heavens, no," said the Commander, "100 is ample to start off with. Now then, Clerk, write that down, and read it out again."

The Clerk read out: "I am informed there is ample pasturage for sheep in the summer; only sheep should be sent, number to commence with 100."

"Add, 'No hay purchasable locally; enough should be sent to feed the brutes.' Lord, I am sick to death of these cursed sheep already."

"What do you want hay for if there is ample pasturage?" said the Canadian.

"To fatten the brutes," said the Commander irritably.

"You don't fatten animals on hay," said the land-agent in a tactful voice, "but I should ask for it in case there is no pasturage."

The Commander's brow was furrowed with thought for several minutes. "I think that does the trick now, doesn't it?" he said to the Clerk. "Cross out, 'I am informed,' and get the telegram coded and sent off."

"There's one thing I should like to say," said the Canadian, rising from his chair and walking to the door, "and that is, that if you turn out a hundred sheep and don't have some dogs to round them up, you'll never see them again; they'll spread all over Russia. Good-night."

"We've got eight dogs in the ship already," said the Commander, "and I wonder what the First Lord will say if I telegraph for sheep-dogs. He'll think I am pulling his leg."

"I really advise you to ask for some dogs," said the Chief, "or anyhow, one. The Admiralty will quite understand that every flock of sheep must have a dog."

"All right," said the Commander rather bitterly. "Add to the end of the telegram, 'Request one sheep-dog may be sent.'"

"Now read it out, Clerk, and then let's go to bed."

The Clerk read out, "There is ample pasturage for sheep in the summer; only sheep should be sent, good climbers; number to commence with 100. Request one dog sheep may be sent."

"What the devil are you driving at, Clerk," said the Commander furiously. "Who said anything about climbing? and I said sheep-dog, not dog

sheep. They'll probably send us out a ram if we put it like that."

"No, that's the proper way of expressing it," said the Chief decidedly. "I've kept stores for twenty years, and I assure you if you ask for a sheep-dog you'll get a ram for a certainty; whereas if you ask for a dog sheep you'll get a dog.

"God forbid we should get a ram," said the embarkation officer. "They're as fierce as the devil."

"Well, you'll probably have to take them all on charge in your store accounts, Chief, when they do arrive," said the Commander wearily, "and then transfer them to the Paymaster's account – when they become mutton; so I suppose we'd better leave it as you say. I'm going to bed, and you can bring me the telegram first thing in the morning, Clerk. Find some more official word than climbers to designate the breed. I hate the thought of mutton already; good-night, everybody," and the meeting broke up.

At lunch next day the Chief asked the Commander if the telegram had gone off.

"Yes, it's gone," said the Commander; "but I cut out the dog altogether, and the Clerk put in something about breed suitable for mountainous country."

"Why did you cut out about the dog?" said the Chief.

"When I woke up I found myself repeating the lines out of the laws of the Navy: 'He does well who tears up in the morning the letter he wrote overnight,' and I wasn't certain if these two blooming experts, the land-agent and the Canadian, were not pulling my leg over that dog. I suppose they've gone out in their trawlers now, leaving me to bear the burden and heat of the day in here. Well, thank God, my telegram can't bear fruit for at least three weeks."

In about three weeks, however, the Admiralty intimated that the first consignment of 100 sheep might be expected in a few days, mentioning that a Scotch mountain breed had been selected, and informing the S.N.O. that on no account were any to be killed until they had been shorn.

It happened that the two experts were in harbour when the telegram arrived, and a council of war was again called to consider this new complication.

"Things are getting ridiculous," said the Commander, "and I'm beginning to think the Admiralty are pulling my leg. I'm sorry I didn't ask for that dog now. How the devil am I going to arrange to shear 100 sheep?"

"I've put that notice up on the mess deck, sir," said the First Lieutenant, "but there has been no result, and the Master-at-Arms says he doesn't think there is a single man in the ship who has ever shorn a sheep, and even if there was, we haven't any shears."

"Can't you shear sheep?" said the Commander to the land-agent; "and if you can't do it yourself, what do you suggest?"

"I think the Chief ought to be able to manage it," said the land-agent drily. "He's got a workshop full of all sorts of noisy beastly machinery, and surely he could devise something or other to cut wool off a sheep."

"It's no use talking rubbish of that sort," said the Chief. "Do you imagine I'm going to put one of my skilled artificers to work to cut wool off a struggling savage brute's back? Your trawlers keep me going night and day with all their repairs, without beginning a wild enterprise of that sort."

"What about the ship's butcher?" said the Canadian. "Surely he can shear sheep?"

"No, he can't," said the First Lieutenant emphatically. "He says he can kill them and skin them, but that is all."

"I'm not going to start an undignified altercation with the Admiralty on this matter," said the Commander, "and so I think the best thing to do is to take no notice of this last brain-wave of their lordships. We will just kill the sheep and skin them, and then use blacklist men to clip wool off the skins with scissors."

"When are they due to arrive?" asked the land-agent.

"Any time in the next couple of days," said the Commander. "I suppose you'll be here to help to land them?"

"I'm afraid we're awfully busy just now," said the land-agent, glancing at the Canadian rather anxiously. "We shall have to be down sweeping off that bit of the coast where the mines were laid last year. If it wasn't for that we should love to help."

"I am taking my division out to-night," said the Canadian.

"You told me you would be in till to-morrow morning," said the Chief rather angrily, "and I've started on the *Fram's* boiler. She can't be ready till then."

"She'll have to follow," said the Canadian. "We think we ought not to waste a minute longer than necessary in beginning this sweeping."

"I've a good mind to take the ship out, and go down to see if I can do anything to help the salvage of the *Carelyn*," said the Commander, "and leave the yacht to carry on S.N.O.—just for a few days only," he added cheerfully.

"If the ship has to go to sea now," said the Chief, "it means the trawler's repairs go to the devil. I can't think why you suddenly want to go and see the *Carelyn*, as we can't do anything more to her now the Russians have undertaken the salvage work."

"I think I can guess why he wants to go," said the land-agent, "but your duty as S.N.O. here, Commander, is to stick to the sheep, I mean ship!"

"I shall be in again at the end of the week, and look forward to lamb and mint sauce. So long, you fellows. I hope you'll enjoy it."

"These retired officers have no sense of duty," said the Commander. "Well, if you go and bump a mine during the next few days, I shall feel it is a judgment on you."

II.

About five days later the trawlers returned and secured alongside their mother cruiser just before dinner. Conversation during dinner was general, and no allusion was made to the sheep; but the land-agent could not help remarking to the Paymaster that he was looking particularly fit and well.

"So would you be looking fit and well if you'd stayed here and not shirked," said the Commander dryly. "The younger officers of the ship are going in for training for sports just at present, and we are hoping you and the Canadian will be entering for one or two of the races."

"The two-mile is the one I'm hoping to win," said the Clerk. "I did it in record time this afternoon."

"That's about the length of the island you were turning into a farm, isn't it?" asked the Canadian; "and, by the bye, how are the sheep getting on? I see we are still on bully beef," he added, looking at the menu.

"I am given to understand that the sheep are very happy indeed," said the Commander. "They are eight dozen of the most agile brutes that ever lived, enjoying themselves to the top of their bent, and likely to continue to do so as far as I can see."

"I thought there were 100 coming," said the land-agent.

"Yes, there were," said the Paymaster, "but four died on the way out, and as far as I can make out they died every other day with suspicious regularity. The trip took eight days, and I said to the Captain that I was glad he wasn't delayed a few more days or some more might have died."

"The old ruffian only grinned, and said he thought it would have been highly probable, that they were very fine sheep, and the rate of mortality might even have risen."

"The yacht arrives in three days' time with the Commodore," said the Commander, "and we have got to have some sheep killed by then. It is really getting beyond a joke—the whole of the ship's officers and the accountant staff have been ashore all day, and they haven't managed to catch a single one."

"They are a wonderful lot of brutes," said the embarkation officer. "They swim like otters, and climb and jump like monkeys, and can do the two miles from one end of the island to the other in about ten minutes. There is any amount of grass there now, and if it wasn't for mosquitoes it would be very pleasant ashore."

"This is five days since the sheep arrived, and we haven't even tasted one yet," said the Commander. "However, I am going to put a stop to it to-morrow all right."

"What are you going to do, Commander?" said the

land-agent anxiously. "Poison them or trap them, or what?"

"No," said the Commander, "I'm going to land small-arm companies, skirmish across the island, and corner them into an enclosure; and if we can't do that I am going to shoot them."

Next morning about sixty men fully equipped, and with a liberal amount of small-arm ammunition, landed on the island. They took their dinners, and were absent until late in the afternoon. Occasional bursts of rifle-firing were heard from the ship, but nothing much could be seen. After the landing party returned it transpired that they had achieved a moderate success, though at great sacrifice of energy and wind. The sheep had completely outwitted them, and they were eventually driven to killing them with rifles. One had been bayoneted in a valiant attempt to break through the line of hot and angry skirmishers.

However, the sheep were killed and eaten, and though by the time they arrived on board they seldom weighed more than 30 lbs., still they were a very excellent change and were much appreciated. The first skin was experimented with in the hopes of getting the wool off, but it was found to be such a laborious and difficult task that it was abandoned, and the skins were sent home with the wool attached. No comment was made by the home authorities.

Towards the end of the season a small Russian ship stranded on the coast in the vicinity, and the Canadian with other trawlers went to her assistance. He found the ship deserted and on fire, and clustered in the stern were three terrified sheep. He rescued the poor brutes, and two of the three were promptly despatched for the use of the two ships' companies of the trawlers.

The third sheep was carefully adorned with a large red rosette on her tail, and next day the Canadian could have been seen seated in a trawler's boat, with a sheep sitting by his side, making for the island on which the farm was situated.

The sheep was landed, and joined what was left of the general flock.

Shortly afterwards a general signal was made to all ships from the S.N.O., informing them that the sheep with the red tag on its tail was the personal property of the Canadian, and was on no account to be killed. It lived for several weeks, and eventually fell a victim to a combined attack by the whole of the Canadian's trawler crew, armed with every sort of weapon from a ·303 rifle to a ·380 revolver.

On board the cruiser it had been considered bad taste even to mention the word sheep for a long time, and the whole subject of the farm was taboo. It was felt by most of the people concerned that they had been made victims, owing to the stupidity of their messmates.

On the few occasions when the subject was discussed, the Chief was always saying that if we had had cattle it would have been all right. The land-agent harped on the sheep-dog with irritating frequency. The Commander made bitter remarks on the inadequacy of his expert advisers, and on the Clerk's wording as to the climbing capabilities of the sheep.

The Canadian had been sarcastically amused at the way the whole thing had been mismanaged, and made nasty comparison with the way things were done in the Colonies. The Paymaster, who by this time was gaunt and careworn, could not eat mutton at all on the rare occasions it appeared in the wardroom, and his feelings towards all who had been in any way mixed up in the farm were too bitter to permit of expression.

On the occasion of the death of the red-tailed sheep, which occurred late in the autumn, the last of the Admiralty sheep had also fallen a victim to a well-armed landing force; and, though riddled with bullets, the Paymaster had been relieved to find that a small portion was still fit for human consumption. The general relief which was felt by all interested parties in the wardroom was so great that, after a glass or two of port, the subject was once more reopened.

The Commander gravely congratulated the Canadian on his success as a stalker, and inquired whether his ancestors had been Border folk or not.

"I didn't steal it," said the Canadian. "I saved the poor brute from a terrible death in a burning ship, and we got it second shot. I turned the skin over to the butcher, Pay.," he added, turning to the Paymaster; "it may help to fill up some of the nasty hiatuses there must be in your farm accounts."

"Thanks," said the Paymaster, "it will certainly help me a little; but really I'm in despair as to how to account for these brutes. They weigh about 20 lbs. by the time they are killed or murdered, and half of it is not fit to eat."

"The only possible thing for you to do, Pay.," said the land-agent, "is to expend them, skins and all. I kept stores years ago when I was a navigator, and there were lots of ways of putting your accounts right. The Admiralty are very good about it as a rule—why, one fellow expended a gun eaten by rats, and nothing was said."

"Well, how do you suggest I should expend sheep?" said the Paymaster. "It sounds all right, but I've got to deal with a different department to the one you used to."

"I should put them down eaten by wolves," said the land-agent.

"Good idea," said the Chief. "Russia is full of wolves, you know, even in these days."

So wolves were decided upon.

H. A. le F. H.

THE RETURN PUSH.

BY QUEX.

XIII.

Sept. 6: The expected orders for the brigade's farther advance arrived at 2 P.M., and by eight o'clock Wilde and myself had selected a new Headquarters in a trench south of the wood. A tarpaulin and pit-prop mess had been devised; I had finished the brigade's official War Diary for August; dinner was on the way; and we awaited the return of Major Veasey from a conference with the infantry brigadier.

The major came out of the darkness saying, "We'll have dinner at once and then move immediately. There's a show to-morrow, and we must be over the canal before daybreak. . . . Heard the splendid news? . . . We've got right across the Drocourt-Quéant line. . . . That's one reason why we are pushing here to-morrow."

We had a four-miles march before us, and Manning and Meddings, our mess waiter and cook, farther down the trench, could be heard grumbling at the prospect of another packing-up, and a search in the dark for fresh quarters. "We always lose knives and forks and crockery when we move like this," Manning was saying in his heavy-dragoon voice.

"You and Wilde had better look for a Headquarters somewhere near the cross-roads at N——," the major told me. "The adjutant and myself will find where the batteries are and join you later."

There was a twenty minutes' delay because in the dark the G.S. waggon had missed us and vanished round the corner of the wood. As we moved off I felt a wet muzzle against my hand, and, stooping, perceived a dog that looked like a cross between an Airedale and a Belgian sheep-dog. "Hullo, little fellow!" I said, patting him. He wagged his tail and followed me.

The German shelling had died down, and we hoped for an uneventual journey. But night treks across ground that has been fought over usually test one's coolness and common sense. The Boche had blown up the bridges over the canal, and descending the slope we had to leave the road and follow a track that led to an Engineers' bridge, so well hidden among trees that the enemy artillery had not discovered it. But it was a long time before our little column completed the crossing. A battery were ahead, and between them and us came a disjointed line of infantry waggons—horses floundering in the mud, men with torches searching for shell-holes and debris that had to be avoided. Only one vehicle was allowed on the

bridge at a time, and a quarter to eleven came before the six mules scrambled the G.S. waggon over. The real difficulty, however, was to decide upon the track to take the other side of the canal. Maps were useless; these were tracks unknown to the topographers. Not one of them followed the general direction in which I believed N—— to be. I resolved to take the track that went south-east, and hoped to come upon one that would turn due east. Heavy shells, one every four minutes, rumbled high overhead and crashed violently somewhere south of us. "They are shooting into M——," said Wilde. We trudged along hopefully.

The dog was still with us, running in small circles round me. "That must be the sheep-dog part of him," I said to Wilde. "He's a bit thin, but he seems a wiry little chap."

The looked-for track due east came when I began to think that we were drawing too near to where the big shells were falling. After half a mile we reached a metalled road; the track we had passed along went over and beyond it. The point to be decided now was whether to go straight on or to turn left along the road. Not a soul, not a single vehicle in sight; it was hard to believe that three Divisions were to make a big attack on the morrow. I halted the waggons on the road, and turned to Wilde. "Let's send Sergeant Starling (the signalling sergeant) to find where the track leads to. We'll walk up the road and find some one who can show it us on the map. There are bound to be dug-outs in this bank."

We walked for half a mile, meeting no one. The dog and an orderly accompanied us. In the distance my ear caught a familiar sound—the clip-clop of horses trotting. It came nearer and nearer. Then we saw a horseman wearing the artillery badge, leading a light draught horse.

"What battery do you belong to?" I asked, stopping him.

"B, sir."

"Where are you going now?"

"A shell came, sir, and hit our waggon. My traces were broke, and I'm going back to the waggon line, sir."

"Where is B Battery?"

"Up this road, sir, and I think you take a turning on the left, but I can't quite remember, sir; we had a bit of a mix-up."

"Bring up the waggons," I told the orderly. "We're on the right road. If Sergeant Starling isn't back, leave some one behind to bring him along."

Before long a jingling and a creaking told us that our carts were close at hand. We walked on, and, reaching a cross-roads, waited to shout for those behind to keep straight on. Half a minute afterwards I heard my name called. A single light shone out from a dug-out in the bank.

It was Garstin of C Battery who had hailed me. "Major Veasey is here with Major

Bartlett," he said, coming towards us. The two majors were sitting in a dug-out no bigger than a trench-slit. "What do you think of my quarters?" smiled Major Bartlett. "Sorry I can't ask you to have a drink. Our mess-cart hasn't arrived yet."

"We've found B and C, so far," interposed Major Veasey, puffing at his pipe, and I must find the —th Infantry Brigade before I finish to-night. . . . This road takes you direct to N——, you know."

Wilde and I and the headquarters waggons resumed our march. We had reached a sunken portion of the road, when above us began the deep steady drone of Boche aeroplanes. We halted the waggons.

A wait, during which Lizzie, the big mare, whinnied, and we looked up and strained our ears to follow the path of the 'planes. Then, farther away than the whirring in the skies had led us to expect, came the ear-stabbing crack of the bombs. One!—two!—three!—four!—five!—six! in as quick succession as rifle-shots. "Damn 'em," said Wilde apprehensively. "I hope they don't get any of our horses."

We were quite near N—— now, and, leaving the waggons in the shelter of the sunken road, Wilde and I again forged ahead. An Army Field Brigade was forming its waggon lines in a field off the roadside amid sharp angry cries of "Keep those lights out!" Soon we approached another sunken road leading into the village. Through the hedge that rose above the bank I saw a dark oblong hut. "Let's look at this place," I said.

In the darkness we made out a number of huts. A ring of sandbags showed where a tent had been pitched. Pushing away the blanket that covered the opening to a huge mined dug-out, we looked upon a row of sleeping engineers. "There are plenty of empty huts here," a corporal, half-awake, told us. It was past midnight. "This will do us for to-night," I said to Wilde.

A humming overhead reminded us that Boche 'planes still hovered near. As we came out of the dug-out a string of red lights floated downwards. A machine-gun spluttered, and a bullet pinged close to us. "What's he up to?" said Wilde, his eyes gleaming. We drew back. A bomb fell three hundred yards away; then another, and another. The ground shook; we thought of our waggons and horses in the road. The dog had dashed outside.

When the 'planes had passed, I sent the orderly to bring up the waggons. The horses went back to the other side of the canal; the men soon found cover for the night. Wilde and I made for the hut that we had noticed first of all. It was not very spacious—nor very clean; but it contained four wire beds to accommodate the major, the adjutant, Wilde, and myself. "Why, it's a guard-room," I called, shining my torch on a painted board affixed to the door.

So, for once in our lives, we slept in a guard-room. The little dog had curled himself up in a corner.

Sept. 7: Zero hour for the launching of the attack was 8 A.M., much later than usual. The village of L—— was the first objective, and afterwards the infantry were to push on and oust the Boche from G—— and S——. It was to be an attack on the grand scale, for the enemy had brought up one fresh Division and two others of known fighting capacity. He was likely to hold very stoutly to the high ground at E——. Our B Battery was under orders to follow close on the heels of the infantry, to assist in wiping out machine-gun nests.

The camp in which we had settled overnight possessed at least three empty Nissen huts in good condition. The place had been captured from the British during the March retreat, and retaken not more than three days ago. Our guard-room sleeping quarters were not roomy enough for four simultaneous morning toilets; so I had my tin bowl and shaving articles taken over to one of the Nissen huts, and I stripped and managed a "bowl-bath" before breakfast. The dog, who had quite taken possession of me, stretched himself on the floor and kept an eye upon me.

The wily Boche had improved our Nissen huts. Trap-doors in the wooden floors and "funk-holes" down below showed how he feared our night-bombers. Jagged holes in the semicircular iron roofing proved the wisdom of his precautions.

By half-past eight a German 5·9 was planking shells over the camp, near enough for flying fragments to rattle against the roofs and walls of the huts. Fifty rounds were fired in twenty minutes. The Boche gunners varied neither range nor direction; and no one was hurt. The shelling brought to light, however, a peculiarity of the dog. He chased away in the direction of each exploding shell, and tried also to pursue the pieces of metal that whizzed through the air. Nothing would hold him. When he returned, panting, it was to search for water; but after a short rest the shells would lure him out again in vain excited quest.

Round his neck was a leather collar with a brass plate. The plate bore the name of a Brigadier-General, commanding an Infantry Brigade of a Division that had gone north. "No wonder he follows you," grinned Wilde. "He thinks you are a General. . . . It must be your voice, or the way you walk."

"More likely that I use the same polish for my leggings as the general," I retorted.

Major Veasey called me and we started forth to see how the battle was progressing. The village of L—— had fallen very quickly, and Major Bullivant had already reported by mounted orderly that his battery had moved through the

village and come into action near the sugar factory.

"Oh, the leetle dawg!" said Major Veasey in wheedling tones, fondling the dog who frisked about him. Then he got his pipe going, and we strode through the desolated village and made across rolling prairie land, broken by earthworks and shell-holes. A couple of heavy hows. were dropping shells on the grassy ridge that rose on our left—wasted shots, because no batteries were anywhere near. We stuck to the valley and passing a dressing station where a batch of walking cases were receiving attention, drew near to the conglomeration of tin huts, broken walls, and tumbled red roofs that stood for L——. We stopped to talk to two wounded infantry officers on their way to a casualty clearing station. The advance had gone well, they said, except at S——, which was not yet cleared. They were young and fresh-coloured, imperturbable in manner, clear in their way of expressing themselves. One of them, jacketless, had his left forearm bandaged. Through a tear in his shirt sleeve I noticed the ugly purple scar of an old wound above the elbow. Odd parties of infantry and engineers stood about the streets. Plenty of wounded were coming through. I ran in to examine a house that looked like a possible Headquarters of the future, and looked casually at a well that the Boche had blown in. The dog was still at my heels.

"Now we want to find the sugar factory to see how Bullivant is getting on," said the Major, refilling his pipe. We pulled out maps and saw the factory plainly marked; and then followed a hard good-conditioned road that led over a hill.

We were getting now to a region where shells fell more freely. A mile to the north-east machine-gun duels were in progress. When we saw the wrecked factory with its queer-looking machinery—something like giant canisters—we pressed forward. No sign whatever of B Battery! I looked inside some tin huts: one had been used as a German mess, another as an officers' bath-house; flies swarming upon old jam and meat tins; filth and empty bottles and stumps of candles, a discarded German uniform, torn Boche prints, and scattered picture periodicals. "There's no one here," mused Major Veasey. "I suppose the battery has moved forward again."

Past a tangled heap of broken machinery, that included a huge fly-wheel, bent and cracked, stood a big water-tank, raised aloft on massive iron standards. "We might be able to see something from up there," said the major. There was a certain amount of swarming to be done, and the major, giving up the contest, aided me to clamber up. Out of breath I stood up in the dusty waterless tank, and got out my binoculars. Towards where the crackle of

machine-guns had been heard, I saw a bush-clad bank. Tucked up against it were horses and guns. Big Boche shells kept falling near, and the landscape was wreathed in smoke.

Before we got to the battery we met Major Bullivant, whose gestures alone were eloquent enough to describe most war scenes. A rippling sweep of his left arm indicated where two machine-gun nests on the bosky western slopes of S—— held up our infantry; a swan-like curl of the right wrist, raised to the level of the shoulder, told where B Battery had been situated, less than a thousand yards from the enemy. "A company of the —— were faltering because of the deadliness of the machine-guns," he said. ". . . I got hold of a platoon commander and he took me far enough forward to detect their whereabouts. . . . We fired 200 rounds when I got back to the battery. My gunners popped them off in fine style, although the Boche retaliated. . . . The infantry have gone on now. . . . I found two broken machine-guns and six dead Germans at the spots we fired at. . . . It's been quite a good morning's work."

He smiled an adieu and went off to join a company commander he had managed to meet. When we reached the bank B Battery were about to move to a sunken road farther forward. Smallman, from South Africa, nicknamed "Buller," was in charge, and he pointed joyously to an abandoned Boche Red Cross waggon that the battery had "commandeered." Four mules had been harnessed to it; the battery waggon line was its destination.

"Gee-ho! they went off in a hurry from here," remarked Major Veasey, looking at a light engine and three trucks loaded with ammunition and corrugated iron that the enemy had failed to get away on the narrow-gauge line running past S——. "What we ought to do is to have a railway ride back. The line goes to N——. That would be a new experience—and I'm tired enough."

"Yes, that would be better than the four-in-hand in the G.S. waggon that you took to the sports meeting," I added.

A Hun 5·9 was firing persistently on a spot 400 yards between where we stood and S——. For once in a way the dog neglected shells, and searched for bully beef leavings among the tins thrown aside by the battery drivers. We were not absolutely safe. The Boche shells were fitted with instantaneous fuses, and after each burst bits of jagged iron flew off at right angles to points as far distant as 700 yards. As we turned to go a piece whistled over our heads and hit one of the Red Cross waggon lead-mules. The poor beast dropped and brought down his frightened, kicking, companion mule also. The drivers had released them by the time Major Veasey and I came up. The wounded mule found his feet, and was led a few yards away. A horrible tear, 8 inches long, showed a

smashed jawbone and cheek-bone; he moved his head from side to side in his pain. "I shall have to shoot him," said the major, loading his revolver. The mule stared dully as the major approached, but drew back sharply when he saw the revolver. The driver could not hold him properly, and the first bullet-hole was not the half-inch to an inch below the fore-lock that means instantaneous death. The poor animal fell, but got up again and staggered away. The major had to follow and shoot again.

We struck off in a more northerly direction on our way back to N——, searching for the forward section of A Battery that had been told off to work in conjunction with a certain infantry battalion. We met Wheater, who was commanding the section, and he told the major that he had not taken his two guns farther forward, because the battalion commander had gone off in a hurry without giving him instructions, without even telling him the line the infantry had reached.

"How long have you been here?" asked the major pointedly.

"Three hours, sir."

"Well, my dear fellow, you certainly should have taken your guns farther forward by now, battalion commander or no battalion commander. You've got a mounted orderly, and you could have sent him back to Brigade Headquarters, informing them of your new position. Then you could have got into touch with the infantry and asked them for targets. It's useless staying here."

The arrival on horseback of the Major-General commanding the Division attacking in this portion of the front, turned the conversation. Not long appointed to his present command, the general during the March retreat had been the Senior Infantry Brigadier in our own Division. He was a particularly able and resourceful soldier; his first demand was for information regarding the work done by our forward guns. The major told him that Wheater's section remained where it was because of the neglect of the battalion commander.

The general listened quietly, and cast a keen eye upon Wheater. "You can take your guns up in safety to ——, and you'll find plenty to shoot at there. Tell any one who wants to know that your instructions come direct from the Divisional commander. . . . And don't rely too much on battalion commanders. Very few battalion commanders know anything about artillery. It's a pity, but it's a fact." He responded with dignity to our salutes, and rode off, followed by his attendant staff officers and the grooms.

The major got more and more tired of the walking. It was half-past two now, and we were both pretty hungry. The dog seemed as frisky and energetic as when he chased the shells at breakfast-time. We passed a big dress-

ing station; a wheeled stretcher stood outside. "As we didn't take a train-ride, should I push you back in that, major?" I inquired with due seriousness. Major Veasey smiled, and we started on the last mile and a half.

There were prospects, we learned when we got back to N—— and read the reports received by the adjutant, of another move forward for the batteries.

"This looks like bringing the waggon lines over the canal," said the adjutant, showing the major the following wire from the staff captain:—

"Good spring at V 201 b 2.7. Water-cart filling-point being arranged. Approaches good for water-carts. Troughs now in order at V 202 c 8.5."

Another message of the same tenor, having to do with gun repairs, ran—

"No. 347 light shop moves to M—— to-morrow. Will undertake quick repairs. Longer jobs will be sent back to Nos. 124 B—— and 192 F——"

A third telegram supplied a reminder that the spiteful Boche still had time to leave devilish traps for the unwary—

"Advanced guard —th Division found small demolition charges in Nissen hut at W 123 b 8.9, and mined dug-out W 129 d 3.2."

"Yes," remarked Major Veasey, "we are certain to move again to-night. The wise man will take a lie down until tea-time." And he hied him to the wire bed in the guard-room.

. . . . . .

At 8.15 that night Wilde and I, the Headquarters party, and the dog, having waited an hour and a half for the orderly that Major Veasey had promised to send back to guide us to a new headquarters, settled in some old German gas-pits, scooped out of a lofty chalk bank. Our march had brought us through L—— and beyond the shell-mauled cemetery where the Boche in his quest of safety had transformed the very vaults into dug-outs.

The horses were sent back to the waggon line and the drivers told to bring them up again at 6 A.M.; and I was arranging the relief of the orderly stationed on the road-side to look out for the major when the major's special war-whoop broke cheerily through the darkness. "The opening of the gun-pit faces the wrong way, and we have no protection from shells—but the tarpaulin will keep any rain out," was the best word I could find for our new quarters.

It was a moderately calm night. We four officers lay down side by side with just our valises to soften the ruggedness of the ground. Fitful flashes in front showed our own guns firing; high-velocity shells, bursting just behind us, made us ponder on the possibility of casualties before the night was out. But we were dog-tired, and slept well; and by 7 A.M. the dog

no longer snuggled against my feet, and we were preparing for further departure.

"We come under the —th Divisional Artillery at 7.30, and have to settle in L—— and await orders," explained Major Veasey. "They don't want our brigade to push on. . . . They say that the infantry could have walked into E—— without trouble, but they were too fagged. The latest report is that the Boche is back there again."

Our chief aim when we walked back towards L—— was to secure decent quarters before troops coming up should flood the village. Our first discovery was a Nissen hut in a dank field on the eastern outskirts. It wanted a good deal of tidying up, but 'twould serve. We were ravenous for breakfast, and the cook got his wood-fire going very quickly. There were tables and chairs to be found, and the dog and I crossed the road, russet-red with the bricks from broken houses that had been used to repair it, on a journey of exploration. Built close to a high hedge was an extra large Nissen hut, painted with the Red Cross sign. Inside were twenty wire beds in tiers; dozens of rolls of German lint and quantities of cotton-wool littered the floor. Outside, five yards from the door, lay the body of a British officer. A brown blanket covered all but his puttees and a pair of neat, well-made brown boots.

Through an opening in the hedge we came upon more Nissen huts. One of them was divided by a partition, and would do for a mess and for officers' sleeping quarters. Another large building could accommodate the men, and I found also a cook-house and an office. I used chalk freely in "staking-out" our claim, and hurried back to the major in a fever of fear lest some one else should come before we could install ourselves.

There were three incidents by which I shall remember our one night's stay in L——. First, the men's cook discovered a German officer's silver-edged iron cross. One of the servants, a noted searcher after unconsidered trifles, had found a Boche officer's overcoat in one of the huts. He went through the pockets and threw the coat away. The cook, coming after him, picked up the coat, and, "Blow me," said he, "if this didn't fall out."

Also, while Major Veasey, Major Simpson, and Major Bullivant were standing talking, a British soldier, pushing a bicycle, passed along the road. Following him, sometimes breaking into a run to keep up, came a plump, soft-faced German boy in infantry uniform, the youngest German I have seen in France. "Why, he's only a kid," said Major Veasey. "He can't be more than sixteen."

"Was ist ihr regiment?" called Major Bullivant. I took it that the major was asking the youngster to what regiment he belonged.

The British private and his

prisoner stopped. The boy Boche smiled sheepishly, yet rather pleasantly, and said something which I didn't understand, and don't believe Major Bullivant did either.

There was a half-minute pause. Then the practical British private moved on, calling simply, "Come on, Tich!" The phrase, "He followed like a lamb," became appropriate.

And I remember one further episode, not so agreeable. Major Veasey and myself had been to call on the Divisional Artillery, under whose orders we were now working. When we returned the dead British officer still lay outside the Red Cross hut. But the neat brown boots had been removed.

"By God, that's a ghoulish bit of work," said the major, angry disgust in his face. "The man who did that is a cur."

XIV.

Sept. 16: The first autumn tints were spreading over field and tree, and the tempestuous rains of the last few days had chilled the air; but the weather had righted itself now, and would prove no bar to the next advance, which it was whispered would take place on the 18th. The American offensive at St Mihiel on the 12th had undoubtedly keyed-up our men, and any one supposed to know anything at all was being button-holed for forecasts of the extent of the Allies' giant thrust up to the time of the winter rains.

There had been a four days' withdrawal of our brigade to more peaceful areas behind the line, and, praise the Saints! we had again come under our own Divisional artillery.

The colonel had returned, and, as usual, the first day or so after coming off leave, appeared preoccupied and reserved. Still there was no one like our colonel; and, in the serene atmosphere of his wise unquestioned leadership, petty bickerings, minor personal troubles, and the half-jesting, half-bitter railings against higher authority, had faded away. He brought the news that the medical board in England would not permit the C.R.A. to return to France; and the appointment of C.R.A. had gone to the colonel of our companion Field Artillery Brigade, now the senior Field Artillery officer in the Division—a popular honour, because, though we thought there could be no colonel so good as ours,—we should not have been such a good brigade had we admitted any other belief,—we all knew Col. —— to be a talented and experienced gunner, and a brave man, with great charm of manner. Besides, it kept the appointment in the family, so to speak. We wanted no outsider from another Division. "You must all congratulate General —— when you meet him," said our colonel gently.

The four days behind the line

had been interesting in their way, despite the rain-storms. We had had hot baths and slept in pyjamas once more. Some of the younger officers and a few of the N.C.O.'s had made a long lorry trip to Abbeville to replace worn-out clothes. Major Bullivant and the adjutant had borrowed a car to search for almost forgotten mess luxuries; and coming back had given a lift to a *curé*, who in the dark put his foot in the egg-box, smashing twenty of the eggs. There had been the booby-trap in the blown-up dug-out. A chair that almost asked to be taken stood half-imbedded in earth near the doorway. I was about to haul it away to the mess when I perceived a wire beneath it, and drew back. Afterwards some sappers attached more wire, and, from a safe distance, listened to a small explosion that would have meant extreme danger to any one standing near. Also there had been the dead horse that lay unpleasantly near our mess. Major Veasey, "Swiffy," the doctor, our rollicking interpreter M. Phineas, and myself all took turns at digging a hole for its burial; and there was plenty of laughter, because old Phineas refused to go near the horse without swathing his face in a scarf, and when wielding the pick raised it full-stretch above his head before bringing it, with slow dignity, to earth—for all the world like a church-bell-ringer. Two nights in succession German night-bombers had defied our anti-aircraft guns and brought cruel death to horses camped alongside the canal. On the second night we had witnessed a glorious revenge. Our searchlights had concentrated upon a Gotha, and they refused to let it escape their glare. Then suddenly from up above came the putt-puttr-putt of machine-guns. Red and blue lights floated down; the swift streakings of inflammatory bullets clove the cobalt sky; with ecstasy and excitement we realised that one of our own airmen was in close combat with the invader. When the enemy 'plane crashed to earth, a blazing holocaust, cheers burst from hundreds of tent-dwellers who had come out to view the spectacle.

And now on the 16th of September we had pitched tents a mile south of L——, which we had left on the 9th, on the confines of a wood that stretched down to a road and fringed it for three parts of a mile to the village of T——. Wilde and the adjutant had departed in high spirits, and their best clothes, to catch the leave train, and I was doing adjutant. Hubbard, a new officer from D Battery, who before getting his commission had been a signalling sergeant, filled Wilde's shoes. I had ridden into T—— to conduct a polite argument with the officer of a Division newly arrived from Palestine on the matter of watering arrangements. His point was that his Division had reached the area first and got the pumps into working order, and his instructions were to reserve the troughs for the horses of his own Division. I argued that if our

horses did not water in T—— they would have to do a seven-mile journey three times a day to the next nearest *abreuvoir*.

"And you can't claim the exclusive use of a watering-point unless Corps grants special permission," I concluded.

"But Corps haven't instructed you to water here," he persisted.

"Neither have they told us *not* to come here," I countered.

We parted, agreeing to refer the whole matter to Corps. Corps, I might add, ruled that we should be allowed to water 200 horses per hour at certain hours, and that the other Division should police the performance.

I had returned in time to administer the distribution of fifty-nine remounts come from the base to replace battery horses, killed by bombs and shell-fire, or evacuated by "Swiffy," the veterinary officer to the Mobile Veterinary Section, as a result of the hard-going and watering difficulties since the advance started on August 8th.

I was talking to the staff captain about the ammunition dumps he had arranged for the coming battle, when the brigade clerk handed me a buff slip just arrived from the Casualty Clearing Station. It stated simply that 2nd Lieut. Garstin had died as the result of gun-shot wounds. Poor boy! a handsome well-mannered youngster who had come out to France practically from school.

I finished talking to the staff captain and walked to the colonel's tent. I told him of Garstin's death.

"Wounded last night taking up ammunition, wasn't he?" said the colonel gravely.

"Yes, sir. He had finished the job and was coming back towards L——. Two of the men were wounded as well."

The colonel pulled out the note-book in which he kept his list of the officers in the brigade.

"That leaves C Battery very short of officers. You'd better transfer—let me see—M'Whirter from 'B.' . . . And ask the staff captain if we can have an officer from the D.A.C."

A little later I sent out the following wire to B and C Batteries:—

"2nd Lieut. J. M'Whirter will be attached to C Battery on receipt of this message. 2nd Lieut. F. E. R. Collinge of No. 1 Section D.A.C. will join B Battery to-day."

The night bristled with excitements. No. 1 Section of the D.A.C., with two hundred horses, were camped a hundred yards from us, and at 9 P.M. I was in their mess, talking book of the day, horses, and stage gossip. A lull in the conversation was broken by the low unmistakable drone of an enemy aeroplane. It sounded right overhead. "What's happened to our anti-aircraft people?" said Major Brown, starting up from the table. "How's he got through as far as this without any one shooting at him?"

We waited in silence. I wondered what had become of the dog who had followed me,

but had remained outside the trench-cover mess.

The first bomb crashed near enough to put out the candles and rattle the glasses on the table. "That fell over there,' said the padre, pointing to behind the wood. "No, it was on this side, not far from my horses," put in Major Brown quickly.

Three more bombs shook the ground beneath us. Then we heard more distant explosions.

Outside we saw torch flashings in the D.A.C. horse lines, and heard hurrying to and fro. "Swiffy" also had hurried down to give his aid.

So serious was the loss of horses through bombing during the summer of 1918 that after each fatal raid an official report must be forwarded and a formal inquiry held to decide whether full precautions for the safety of the horses had were taken. At 9.30 P.M. I received this note from Major Brown:—

> The following casualties occurred to animals of this Section by hostile bombs at 7 P.M. on 16th inst.—
>
> Map location D 230, c. 97: killed, 7; wounded, 11.

Half an hour later a message from C Battery, who were a mile and a half away along the valley, informed me that their casualties in horses and mules numbered 19.

At two in the morning I was aroused by a furious beating of wind and rain upon the tent. Hubbard, already in receipt of wet on his side of the tent, was up fastening the entrance-flap, which had torn loose. Sharp flashes of lightning and heavy thunder accompanied the squall when it reached its height. "I hope the pegs hold," shouted Hubbard, and we waited while the tent-sides strained and the pole wavered. The dog growled, and a scuffling behind us was followed by the appearance, at the back of the tent, of the colonel's head and shoulders. In his pyjamas, drenched, and shivering with cold, he struggled inside. "My tent's down," he called sharply. "Houston's got my kit into his bivouac. . . . You two fellows hop outside and hammer in the pegs. . . . Let's save this tent if we can. . . . And some one lend me a towel for a rub down!"

Wrapped in rain-coats, Hubbard and myself faced the skirling rain. When we slipped inside again the colonel had dried himself. I lent him a blanket and my British warm, and he settled himself contentedly on the ground, refusing to occupy either camp-bed.

"The annoying part," he said, with the boyish ring in his voice that made his laugh so attractive, "is that my tent was much better put up than yours."

The wind still blew when we got up in the morning. A valiant tale came from "Swiffy," the doctor, and M. Phineas. They occupied a tent 'twixt a bank and a hedge, nearer to the D.A.C. M. Phineas had held up the pole with folds of wet canvas alternately choking him or whirling round him, while

"Swiffy" yelled for him to kneel upon the tent bottom to keep it fast, and expected him to fetch a servant at the same time. The doctor, enfolded by the wanton canvas in another state compartment of the blown-about tent, was cut off from communication with the other two, and fought the battle on his own.

The struggle to keep the tents from collapsing was crowned at 6 A.M. by the urgent and peremptory order from Division: "All tents in the Divisional forward area are to be struck before dawn."

It was an order that breathed an understanding fear of the inquisitive eyes of enemy aerial observers. But if the G.S.O.I. who issued the order really knew——

. . . . . .

Under cover of the darkness the brigade moved up 6000 yards to secret positions for the morrow's battle. We were behind our own infantry once again, and it was to be a big advance. We had come over forty miles since August 8 in a series of three- to eight-mile leaps; for the third time the battalions had been brought up to something like strength, and they were full of fight. In the mud and slime of the Somme and Flanders in 1916 and 1917, when each advance was on a narrow front and ceased after a one-day effort, I always marvelled at the patient fatalistic heroism of the infantry. A man went "over the top" understanding that, however brilliant the attack, the exultant glory of continuous chase of a fleeing broken enemy would not be his; and that, should he escape wounds or death, it would not be long before he went "over the top" again, and yet again. But this open fighting had changed all that. It showed results for his grit and endurance to the humblest "infanteer." And remember, it was the civilian soldier — unversed in war, save actual war — who accepted and pushed home the glorious opportunities of achievement that these wondrous days offered.

The colonel and I mounted our horses at eight o'clock, saw C and D Batteries begin their march, and called upon the new C.R.A. in his hut-headquarters at L——. He was genuinely pleased at being congratulated upon his appointment, and, I remember, produced for me a Havana, come straight from London. Both the general and the brigade-major had good things to say of the dog, who was now definitely known as "Ernest"—chiefly because I had said "Hullo" to call him so many times that inevitably one recalled Mr Frank Tinney and his mode of addressing his stage assistant.

From L—— the colonel and myself rode eastwards two miles and a half. The road was crowded with waggons and horses, returning in orderly fashion from delivering ammunition. In the distance guns boomed. When we got to the *pavé* the colonel said we would walk across country the rest of the way. Our

horses had only been gone a couple of minutes when the colonel suddenly halted and exclaimed, "I've let Laneridge go back with my steel helmet."

"Should we wait a few minutes on the road, sir?" I responded quickly; "Laneridge is likely to come back and try to catch you. . . . Of course he doesn't know where our headquarters will be."

For answer the colonel stood in the centre and shouted with studied clearness—"Laneridge! . . . Laneridge!"

We tried a joint call, and repeated it; but there was no sound of returning hoofs.

One curious result followed. An infantry soldier, who had passed us, came back and, in a north-country accent, asked, "Beg pardon, sir, but did you call me?—my name's Laneridge, sir."

"No," said the colonel, "I was calling my groom."

The man passed on. "That's a really striking coincidence," remarked the colonel. "Laneridge is not a common name."

After waiting five minutes we continued our walk, and crossing a valley dotted with abandoned gun-pits and shallow dug-outs, came to a shrub-covered bank from which a battery was pulling out its guns.

"Our headquarters will be here," said the colonel succinctly. "Hubbard has been sorting things out. There are dug-outs along the bank, and I expect we shall find something in the trench down there."

Hubbard had indeed found a place for the mess in the trench, while he pointed to a cubby-hole in the bank that would do for the colonel, and to another shelter, a yard high from roof to floor, in which he and I could lie down. The telephone lines to the batteries and to Div. Art. were laid. He was ready for the battle.

Zero hour was at 5.20 A.M. The battery commanders had received the operation orders during the afternoon. I reported our arrival to the brigade-major; and not worrying much about some hostile 'planes that seemed to be dropping bombs in the neighbourhood of the front line, we turned in.

At 1.30 A.M. the telephone near my head buzzed. I heard the colonel say, "Are you troubled by gas?"

"Haven't noticed any, sir."

"You had better have your box respirator ready. It seems to be coming in a cloud down the valley."

I dozed off again, but half an hour later the uneasy movements of "Ernest" roused me. I sneezed several times, and felt a burning in the throat. This was undoubtedly gas. Hubbard I found to be a heavy sleeper, but by punching hard enough I made him open his eyes, and we put on our box respirators. It was half an hour before the gas sergeant reported that the air had cleared. We slept once more. Half an hour before zero time the gas rattle sounded again, and indeed we were wearing our respirators, when at 5.20 the usual sudden crackle and

rumble all along the front announced the opening of the barrage. Judged by the quickness with which he put down a retaliatory barrage, the enemy was prepared for our attack. Nothing could now hold "Ernest." He dashed tirelessly north, south, east, west, towards whichever point of the compass he heard a gun firing or a shell exploding. "I'm sure that dog's mad," commented the colonel when we breakfasted at 7 A.M. "I watched him from my dug-out for three-quarters of an hour after the barrage started. He passed the opening eighty times, then I got tired of counting. He seems to take a marvellous interest in shells. . . . It's a pity the staff captain can't use him for ammunition returns."

When we were conducting a settled defence of the line, or registering our guns for a battle, no one visited the "O.P.'s," or the front line, more than the colonel. Many and many a morning, with a couple of sandwiches and a slab of chocolate in his pocket, he tramped to the O.P. and stayed there until dark, criticising the shooting of the batteries and finding fresh targets for their fire. But during a set battle he did all his work on the telephone, in touch with Divisional artillery one way, and with the batteries, the F.O.O.'s, and the infantry, the other. There is never much news during the first hour, or even until the full artillery programme has been completed. By that time the brigade expects definite reports as to whether the infantry have reached their objectives, and upon what new points they require artillery assistance for consolidating positions or for repelling counter-attacks.

But on this occasion the first message reached brigade at 5.50 A.M. C Battery reported that immediately the barrage opened the Boche retaliated upon them with 5·9's. They had had six killed and ten wounded. The killed included the sergeant who so splendidly commanded C's forward sniping-gun on that bewildering nerve-testing March 21st.

I spoke to the other batteries. D Battery, and B, who had horses handy to move forward when the first objective was taken, had been little troubled, but A had had their mess smashed in, and three of the servants wounded. I rang up "Buller," who was doing liaison with the —th Infantry Brigade, and he said it was understood that two companies of the —— had lost their way, but generally the attack proceeded well.

The uncertainty lasted until 11 A.M., when the colonel completed a telephone conversation with the brigade-major. The two Divisions on our left had not gained their first objective because of exceedingly stout opposition on the part of a German corps, who had gained a fine fighting reputation during the past two weeks. The —th south of our Division had done very well, capturing and advancing beyond the village of T——. Our Divisional infantry had cleared R—— after

tough fighting, but their further progress was checked because of the hold-up on the left. Reserve battalions of the two Divisions chiefly affected by this resistance were to attack as soon as possible.

"The Australians have done extraordinarily well down south," the colonel told me. "They simply marched through with their tanks, capturing guns and prisoners wholesale, and are on their most distant objective."

Then he rang up Major Simpson. "Don't take your battery forward until you get definite orders from the brigade," he said. "The enemy still hold the high ground north of us."

Major Bullivant, always keen on making an early reconnaissance during a set battle, rang up at noon to say that he had been as far as a high wood, a mile and a half in front of his battery. "I got a very long view from there," he went on, "and saw no sign at all of any Boche. . . ."

The colonel, putting on his pince-nez, studied his map and asked the major for the exact position. "Yes," he observed, "that's on the 140 contour, and you must have seen as far as —— copse."

His next remark revealed how his mind was working. "Did you notice any tracks from the wood towards the batteries? . . . Two tracks! . . . but my map shows a line of barbed wire running across . . . Good! . . . there is a useable track as far as 19 c, and by striking east before you come to the cross tracks it is possible to find an opening in the wire. . . . Good, Bullivant. . . . I expect I shall move the batteries that way. . . . No, no orders to move yet!"

At 1.15 P.M., after further talks with the brigade-major, the colonel told me to send out this message to the four batteries:—

"Brigade will advance as soon as possible to position in F 20, or if that locality is full up, in F 21 c. Prepare to advance, and report to Brigade commander at F 20 c 4, 2."

The colonel's horses had been ordered up from the waggon line. "Hubbard and I will go on," he told me, "and Hubbard can commence laying out lines to the batteries' new positions. You will remain here to keep in touch with Division. I shall be back before we move, and batteries are not to go forward until orders are issued from here."

He returned at 4 P.M. and told me to send out orders for an immediate advance to the positions chosen. I was returning from the signallers' dug-out when a young major belonging to the ——s passed, followed by a sergeant. The major looked pale and worn, but walked quickly. There are moments when personal acquaintance with members of other branches of the Service possesses a very direct value. I did not know Major —— very well, but a habit contracted through frequent visits to the Infantry made me call out "Any news?"

"Our brigade's doing a clearing-up attack at five o'clock," he answered without stopping.

"We don't know anything about that," I said, catching him up. "How long is it since orders were issued?"

"I've only just left the General," he replied, still walking ahead.

"Can you spare two minutes to explain the scheme to the colonel," I pressed. "Our batteries are just about to move up."

"I hardly have time to get to the battalion," he answered with a frown of dissent.

"Two minutes!" I pleaded —and succeeded. We hurried to the mess. There was a quick clear exchange of words between the major and the colonel. The major sped away as the colonel thanked him. "Telephone at once to the batteries to prevent them moving!" said the colonel, turning to me.

Before five minutes had passed, the colonel after a telephone talk with the brigadier-general, had arranged a short barrage programme for the batteries.

"There's usefulness in being a gossip, you see," he smiled, a quarter of an hour later.

The orders for the batteries to advance still held good, and immediately the barrage ceased they pulled out. By 6 P.M. the colonel had ridden forward again. My instructions were to remain until the divisional signalling officer had laid a line to the new Brigade headquarters. At eight o'clock, followed by "Ernest" and the brigade signallers who had stayed with me, I rode through St E—— and dipped into a cul-de-sac valley crowded with the field batteries of another Division. Our way took us toward and across gorse-clad, wild-looking uplands eastward. Night approached. Just as we halted at a spot where two puddly, churned-up sunken roads crossed, guns behind and on either side of us belched forth flame and rasping sound. Eighteen-pounder shells screamed swiftly over us; the whole countryside spurted flashes. One of the horses started and plunged with nervousness. "It's an S.O.S. call, sir," said a driver who had put his horse under a bank, raising his voice against the din. "Ernest," his little body quivering with excitement, was already racing backwards and forwards. I told my groom to take my horse into the sunken road, and started to look for the colonel and the headquarters' party. A sticky walk up the track to the left took me within a couple of hundred yards of the village of R——, where most of the Boche shells were falling. No signs of headquarters up there. After a lot of shouting to persuade the dog to keep near me, I turned back and went through the mud again, past the cross-roads junction, and along a still slimier water-logged cart-track. I found every one in headquarters digging shelters in the side of the road. The

servants had rigged up a corrugated-iron habitation for the colonel. The brigade clerks, the signallers, and the cooks had dug hard, and made use of trench-covers, with the swift resource that long experience of trench-life had developed into a sort of second nature. Hubbard had arranged an "elephant," raised on two rows of ancient sandbags, for himself and me to snuggle under.

"I've sent out S.O.S. lines to the batteries," said the colonel, who was sitting on a box in a long disused gun-pit. "We'll turn this place into a mess to-morrow."

The firing died down. I sent some one to tell the groom to take the horses back to the waggon line which was being established at the headquarters' position we had just left. The cook prepared us a simple meal. By 10 P.M. the brigade-major had telephoned instructions for the night-firing with which the batteries were to busy themselves. Our night was disturbed by the swish-plop of gas-shells, but none came near enough seriously to disquiet us.

(To be continued.)

"GREEN BALLS."

BY PAUL BEWSHER.

IV.

UP THE COAST.

"Towards the silver glittering sea we go
And cross the foam-streaked coast, and leave behind
The fields. . . ."

—*Crossing the Channel.*

IN the train on the way to Dover my pilot told me, with a dismal expression overshadowing his face, a piece of bad news.

"Do you know," he said, "while we were on leave a Handley got shot down off Zeebrugge! —— was the pilot, and I think he was drowned. One gunlayer was saved, badly wounded. A French seaplane which picked up the other got shot down too! We were well off at Luxeuil!"

With this discouraging information, casting a gloom over the immediate outlook, we crossed the Dover Straits by destroyer, and arrived at the aerodrome to find it busy with these daylight patrols.

My pilot had no machine in action, so, though he was not wanted, I was allocated to a machine on the first patrol that took place. There was a certain amount of concern at the aerodrome in connection with the missing pilot, who was very popular, and I was glad to hear that we were to be accompanied by a patrol of triplanes.

This was good news, and one of the pilots, who had been on a daylight Handley-Page patrol, had described it in his inimitable way as follows:—

"We were tooling along merrily, about ten miles off the coast, when a Hun seaplane came up from Ostend—a nasty little green blighter. A 'tripe' just turned round—just turned round, mind you, and the Hun seaplane looked at him, and went down quick. When we were off Zeebrugge, Sinjy, my observer, saw some little specks off the Mole. Of course he wanted to have a look at them—he is a full-out beggar—said they were Hun torpedo-boats. We turned on and flew right towards the coast. Sinjy was full out and got ready to drop the bombs. Then he decided they were just trawlers. It was just in time, then—*woof*—about a hundred shells burst all at once just behind our tail. Every battery on the coast must have opened fire at once. They were just waiting for us to come right in and then let go. I shoved the nose down to 80 knots and shifted like smoke out to sea!"

That was very encouraging, especially the part about the triplanes, so really I felt very anxious to go, although I was frightened. I have often felt this mingled eagerness and apprehension, and I have come to the conclusion that although

I do not want to do the job, I want to have *done* it, to have had so much more experience behind me. Perhaps this is the impulse behind so many deeds done against personal inclinations. You think far enough ahead to realise how pleasant your feelings will be when you have passed through some danger or some excitement.

One afternoon, after many delays, we started on a coastal patrol. The machine had a crew of five: the pilot, a tremendous fair-haired fellow, resolute and impulsive, a real Viking, who towered above me, and three gunlayers, one in the front and two behind. We carried a small load of bombs, and were under orders to bomb any vessel which was attacked by the leading machine, and were also told that no vessel this side of the Nieuport piers, the seaward end of the lines, was to be touched.

The flight was a small one, of three machines only, and the leading machine was distinguished by white streamers attached to the outside struts of the starboard and port wings.

It was a sunny day when we left the ground, and rose up in great circles over the huddled red roofs of Dunkerque, and the pink-and-white seaside suburb of Malo-les-Bains.

The leading machines started to fly down the coast towards the lines before we had gained any height at all. Our engines were running badly, and we were well below the other machines, so the pilot asked me what I thought.

"Leave it to you!" I said—one half of me whispering, "Go back!" the other half whispering "Push on!"

"Well, I'll see!" he said, as he pulled back the control wheel almost as far as he dared without "stalling" the machine. The engines complained; the finger of the speed indicator wobbled undecidedly about 48 miles an hour, and the height indicator slowly moved to 4000 feet.

So we passed over La Panne, as the two leaders flew bravely along the coast soaring upwards like swallows, while we followed gamely but ignobly behind. When we could distinctly see the Nieuport piers and the Belgian floods stretching down towards Dixmude, the leader turned out to sea. Then to our joy he evidently realised our plight, for instead of flying on at an angle away from the coast, he swept round in a big circle to give us a chance to rise up to his level. Then he turned once more out to sea, the second machine followed him, and we, still many hundred feet below them, straggled behind.

Above us now flew, gleaming white against the blue afternoon sky, several triplanes, whose flashing wings brought us their message of protection. The outlook did not seem so bad after all. The pilot, in a red silk pirate cap with its tassel blown out by the wind, looked down at me smiling. I wore a blue silk cap and was wearing an ordinary overcoat and a muffler, and my thin walking shoes looked very silly hanging a few inches off the floor in that great machine.

The sunlight came streaming into the cockpit, the sea glittered with a friendly spaciousness beneath us, and this voyage in the wind seemed a pleasant spring adventure far from the dangers of war.

We steadily drew away from the coast, whose misty outline lay some way below us to our right. When we were abreast of the Nieuport piers, and were about to cross into enemy waters, we could scarcely see more than the edge of the shore and a mile or so of country inland.

When we had flown on for a few minutes more, I heard a sudden loud crash. At once I looked to the engine to see if its indicators gave hint of trouble. They were quite normal. Then I looked back and saw, through the square framework of the tail, a cloud of smoke.

I turned quickly to the pilot and shouted, "We're being shelled!"

He looked back, and turned to me dubiously.

"What the blazes is it? It can't be the Westende guns—we're too far from the coast!"

Then I saw below me three or four shell-bursts leaping out near the water, not far from two destroyers which were lying below us, small and slim lines of black on the sparkle of the sea.

"I can't make it out!" he said. "It's very rum. Let's push on!"

Some way ahead of us rose and fell the dark outlines of the two other Handley-Pages, and we could notice that curious optical delusion of the air, the apparently slow revolution of their propellers, blade after blade appearing to go round in a jerky fashion, though in reality they were whirling invisibly at a speed of 1600 revolutions a minute, or even more. The only explanation of this spectacle, which can often be seen by an airman, is that the vibrations of his machine affect his eyes like the rapid shutters of a cinema camera, and he has continual momentary glances of the propeller in a fixed position.

Soon we were abreast of Ostend, and we could see the inland lake of its Bassin de Chasse lying beyond the edge of the coast. We passed Ostend, and far ahead of me to my right I could see the curve of the Zeebrugge Mole, very small and dim in the distant haze.

I scanned the sea with my eyes, looking in vain for submarines or destroyers or seaplanes. No mark of any kind broke the shining surface of the water. Now and then a triplane or a "D.H.4," flying on some coastwise expedition, slid up to us and dived down past us, or flew a hundred feet above our heads, showing its distinguishing letters and its red, white, and blue cockade. The pilot sat beside me, his huge body almost half out of the machine, his aquiline nose and pronounced chin driving firmly through the rush of the wind, which flapped and fluttered our silk caps; the sunlight shone with the pale gold of spring across our shoulders and arms, and though I was ten miles out to sea in a land

machine off an enemy shore, I felt curiously safe, curiously unafraid. The sea seemed to be a safeguard. Little did I know that I was passing over the scene of my midnight tragedy a year later, when I was to regard the sea in a different aspect—when I was to learn by a bitter lesson its pitiless power.

The machines in front of us swung round to return. We swung round too to give ourselves a chance of gaining height before we were passed. This was not needed, for to our amusement we saw that whereas, as was only natural, the other machines had flown up the coast with their nose well in air, climbing steadily, now they were returning homewards with their noses well down, getting out of the danger zone (and it *was* a danger zone for a slow cumbersome Handley-Page) as quickly as possible.

They passed nearly a thousand feet beneath us, and this time we followed them easily. When we were almost abreast of the Nieuport piers once more I suddenly saw a little puff of hard black smoke appear in the air in front of us. Its clean-cut outlines grew less distinct and more hazy as it spread and grew thinner. Another puff appeared near it and a little above it, and in turn began to enlarge and dissipate.

"Why! They're shelling us!" exclaimed my pilot.

I looked below. There lay the two destroyers steaming slowly in circles.

"I believe it's those confounded destroyers!" I said. "They must be British too, off here. Can't they see our marks, blame fools?"

Two or three more shells appeared between us and our two companions, who were now going round and round in circles evidently very mystified. It looked so amusing that we could not help laughing, now that the fire was not meant for us. Then the shells came over to us again. It was a curious sight. You would look out into the blue sky and the mist-bound coast, and suddenly, in absolute silence (for the roar of our engines deafened us), would appear, out of nothing, a perfectly hard outline, looking as solid as a piece of coal, or a crumpled top-hat. There it would appear in a second of time and would hang in the sky—an apparent mockery of gravity. Its outline would flux and change, it would writhe and roll round into an ever larger expanse of vapour, its edge would grow soft and more ragged, and in a few minutes it would be a little cloud of haze, and nothing more.

Suddenly the pilot exclaimed, "It *is* them, the swine, I saw them fire!" and impetuously threw round the wheel and pushed forward the rudder. The machine swung round at a tremendous pace, and a most curious incident occurred. Ahead of us were the two machines, some way below us, with their noses pointing downwards. Now to our amazement we saw them mount up, up, up, into the sky, with their tails down as though they were climbing furiously, and then the coast shot round and rose up into the sky as well.

In the midst of this mad inversion of the universe the pilot turned to me and calmly said—

"What the blazes has happened, Paul, it looks all wrong? What shall I do?"

"Shove her nose down, old man!" I said. "It looks mighty rum to me—but we'll get out somehow!"

The universe swept round us again, the coast fell down, the Handley-Pages dropped below us with their noses towards the sea. The pilot looked at me, I looked at him.

"What on earth was that?" he said.

"Must have been jolly nearly upside down!" I suggested, feeling a bit dazed.

The memory of that brief and mystified conversation, as we sat side by side in a machine which had assumed some incomprehensible position, has remained in my memory as one of the strangest moments I have known.

The shells still burst near us and the pilot got annoyed.

"Let's drop our stuff on them! Get in the back! They can't be British. They must be able to see our marks. We're only seven thousand."

"Well! What about the leader? We daren't do it unless he does—we'll get in a thundering row. Anyway they are just off our coast!"

The leading machines still flew round undecidedly. The destroyers below still fired their occasional shells. One burst rather near us.

"I'll bomb them and chance it—the swine!" said the pilot. "You get in the back!"

"All right, you take the responsibility!" I said, and climbed into the back of the machine and lay on the floor under his seat. I pulled open the sliding-door and a burst of wind came blowing up on my face. Below me lay a little square of sea, on which I could see no destroyer, but I could tell by the way it was racing under us that we were doing a steep turn.

Still the two little black shapes of the destroyers did not come into the frame of the picture. I put my head out below the machine and looked for them. I could not see them. If I had I was determined to drop my bombs on them whatever they were.

I hurriedly got back beside the pilot and asked him what he was doing.

"I decided not to touch them, old man! I want to bomb them—whatever they may be. Anyway the leader's gone off—we better follow."

Some way ahead of us were the two other machines flying homewards. We toiled on behind them, receiving a few parting shell-bursts as a farewell. Out to sea we flew till we were off Dunkerque, and then we turned in towards the coast. We passed over the crowded docks, and over the brown roofs of the town, gliding down with our engines throttled back, when suddenly I looked to the left and saw that one of the propellers had stopped dead. My heart jumped into my throat, and I took the pilot by the arm.

He looked round and told me to get into the back in order

to try to start up the engine. I hurried into the little canvas-walled room and gripped the metal starting-handle, and tried to turn it again and again in vain. The sweat poured off my forehead, my arm ached, but I could do nothing. It would not move.

I got back to the pilot, and told him.

"All right!" he said. "I'll land her somehow!"

We were getting near the aerodrome, on which, to my great relief, a machine was "taxying" towards the hangars. It was a relief to see that the aerodrome was clear, because, with no motive-power to take us off the ground again, or to swing us round in a hurry, we should be helpless if we were to land when some other machine was in the way, and we had to land at once. So, as we faced the wind, and I saw the pilot very wisely stop the other engine, I felt rather anxious, and hoped it was going to be all right. If we "undershot," we might land on a shed or a hedge; if we "overshot," we might run into a ditch—there would be no means of preventing the calamity. The pilot must have perfect judgment, and must touch the ground at the right moment.

So I sat beside him, very tense and on the alert, longing to give my advice, but knowing it was best to keep silent, even if I thought he was wrong, lest I should confuse his judgment.

Knowing he was probably feeling the strain of responsibility, since four other lives than his own depended on his skill, I just gripped his arm and said—

"Priceless . . . priceless . . . we're going to do a topping landing. . . ."

To the right we swung, and then to the left, as we did an "S" turn, to lessen our gliding distance.

"Ripping, old man! We'll just — do — it — nicely. . . . Hardly a bump! . . . Well! that was some landing!"

The feat had been achieved, and we had landed with both propellers stopped.

Soon we were in the mess eating our "4½-minute" or hard-boiled eggs, drinking tea, and talking excitedly about the flight, our faces flushed with the wind, our hair dishevelled.

Then the glow of pleasure is felt, when the flight is finished, the danger is over, and you can rest, feeling that the rest is well deserved.

An evening report from a reconnaissance squadron informed us that the destroyers had been seen steaming into Ostend harbour. Our feelings can be imagined. Lost chances like that bite deep, and when I met the pilot many many months later on his return from a German prison camp, after the Armistice (for he had landed with engine failure behind the German lines), he said to me—

"Oh, how I wished we *had* bombed those two destroyers! What a chance! What a chance!"

This incident illustrates well the curious point of view of an air-bomber. If those destroyers had been British, and the pilot

had ordered me to bomb them, I could have done so with equanimity. If at any time I had been sent at night to attack a British town I would have released my bombs with no feeling of horror; indeed I would not have had any feelings at all. At first sight that statement sounds brutal and incredible. Let me say that I could not stand on a beetle without a feeling of repugnance. It has made me feel sick to shoot an animal in pain. The idea of killing is repulsive to me.

The explanation is that the airman dropping bombs does not drop them on human beings. He presses a lever when the metal bar of his bomb-sight crosses a certain portion of the "map" below him. It is merely a scientific operation. You never feel that there are human beings, soft creatures of flesh and blood, below you. You are not conscious of the fear and misery, of the pain and death, you may be causing. You are entirely aloof.

I have knelt in the nose of the machine over my objective, and have pressed the bomb-handle at the critical moment without ever having seen the bombs in the machine. After a certain time I have seen in the darkness below flash after flash leap up from the dim ground. In my mind those *flashes* have been caused by the movement of my handle. I have not thought of yellow bombs dropping out of the machine, whirling through the air with an awe-inspiring scream, and exploding with a cruel force as they strike the earth. It is as though I had pressed an electric switch, and had seen a lamp glow in response in some far distant signal station.

If I had been taken to a scene of devastation, and had been shown a line of mutilated bodies, and had heard some one say "You did this!" I should have been overcome with remorse and sickness, and would have gone away in tears of shame and loathing. Yet in the air, when the handle has been thrust home for the last time, and the bombs are actually scattering their splinters of death, I would get back to my seat and laugh and say—

"That's done, Jimmy! Let's push home!"

Once at Dunkerque I saw a street closed by a barrier, round which was a crowd of quiet people. There in the middle of it was a house which had been demolished by a German bomb during the night, and in the cellar lay thirty or forty dead or dying people. Men worked frantically at the crumbled wreckage. An ambulance drove through the barrier. Next to the driver sat an old man with the tears streaming down his cheeks. His wife lay dead in the back.

I turned away with a feeling of horror, and said to my friend—

"I never want to bomb again!"

(To be continued.)

ON PATROL.—IX.

A.D. 400.

A LONG low ship from the Orkneys' sailed,
With a full gale driving her along,
Three score sailormen singing as they baled
To the tune of a Viking song—

We have a luck-charm
Carved on the tiller,
Cut in the fore-room
See we Thor's Hammer;
Gods will protect us
Under a shield-burgh,
Carved in the mast we—
The Runes of Yggdrasil!

But the Earl called down from the kicking tiller-head,
"Six hands lay along to me!
Tumble out the hawsers there, Skallagrim the Red!
For a battle with a Berserk sea;
Sing a song of work, of a well-stayed mast,
Of clinch and rivet and pine,
Of a bull's-hide sail we can carry to the last
Of a well-built ship like mine.
Never mind the Runes on the bending tree
Or the charms on the tiller that I hold,
Trust to your hands and the Makers of the Sea,
To the gods of the Viking bold!

Thor of the Hammer—
King of the Warriors,
We are not thralls here
—Men of the sea;
We are not idle,
Fight we as seamen,
Worthy your aid then
—Men of the Sea!"

KLAXON.

EXPERIENCES OF A WAR BABY.

BY ONE.

CHAPTER VIII.—BATTLE.

As the whole world now knows, noon on Wednesday, 31st May 1916, found the Grand Fleet in the eastern half of the North Sea, steering an easterly course. The day was fine and warm, a great change for the better after a stormy winter. The sea was absolutely calm, and the haze rendered the visibility low, though occasionally there were clear intervals when the visibility rose to about twelve miles. To all appearances we were having a very quiet and peaceful voyage.

In the gun-room of the *Penultimate* there was not a murmur of war. The general opinion of those officers who worried about the reasons for our operations was, that we were engaged in one of the periodical "sweeps" of the North Sea. We had indulged in a number of these "stunts," all precisely similar, without seeing any ships other than a few Dutch fishing smacks. Occasionally we would steam through wreckage, floating timber, &c., evidence of Von Tirpitz's campaign against the shipping of the world. On one such occasion we steamed for half an hour through a mass of logs of wood, all precisely similar in shape and size, and probably intended for railway sleepers or pit props. They must have marked the grave of some hapless neutral. Not once had we seen the wrecker himself. Thus, after lunch, all who were not proceeding on watch, composed themselves in chairs, and on settees, for slumber.

I was one of the afternoon watch-keepers, and at 12.30 P.M. made my way up to a hut above the fore-bridge, where I kept my watch at sea. As the weather was warm and the watch was not long, I took no extra clothes with me, a fact which I much regretted later.

My duty was to look out for submarines, and report any suspicious objects in the water to the officer of the watch. In the hut, as well as myself, were eight men, of whom I was in charge. The early part of the watch was uneventful. The sea was so calm that the slightest ripple could be seen. I was beginning to feel the soothing effects of lunch, when I was galvanised into life by a report from the look-out man at my side—

"Suspicious objic' in the water two points on the port bow, sir."

I searched the face of the waters on the bearing he had given, and sighted the "objic'." There was an undoubted swirl

in the water, though no cause for the swirl was visible. Even so, it was undoubtedly my duty to report the fact to the officer of the watch, so that he might deal with the matter as he thought best. Especially was this the case, as another ship had reported the presence of submarines a few hours earlier.

"Suspicious object in the water two points on the port bow, sir," I reported down my voice-pipe.

"Very good," replied the O.O.W., and through my look-out slit I could see him searching for the supposed enemy with his glasses.

I resumed my search, and in a few seconds sighted the cause of the disturbance. The water was very calm and clear, so that, at the height my hut was above sea-level, I could see some feet below the surface. About fifty yards ahead of the ship I saw a large fish swim lazily across our bow and disappear. Luckily, the officer of the watch did not see him, and continued to look for the submarine, with visions of D.S.O.'s and promotion looming large in his mind. His disappointment was a heartrending sight.

At 2 P.M. there came a commotion on the bridge. A signal was shown to the officer of the watch, which apparently gave him much satisfaction, and shortly afterwards the captain and navigator arrived. The bridge was not far below me, and I watched the scene through my look-out slit. They were all engaged in an argument, and appeared very pleased. By applying my ear to the voice-pipe through which I reported, I could catch snatches of their conversation, though the look-out was not as bright as it should be. At first I could hear nothing but one officer repeating, "Der Tag, der Tag," in a most cheerful tone, which made me wonder for his sanity. Then I heard more conversation, in which the words "*Galatea*" and "enemy cruisers" appeared. Finally, some one read the signal aloud, from which it appeared that the light cruiser *Galatea* had reported that she was in touch with a squadron of cruisers, probably hostile.

This, indeed, was news. In all probability we should find that the birds had flown before we got our chance, but at any rate this sweep would not be entirely blank. I told my look-outs what I had heard, which keyed them up to a greater pitch of watchfulness.

We turned to the southward at once, and began to work up our speed. Ahead of us we could see the battle cruisers, about ten miles distant, flying along at high speed. Signals reporting the presence of the enemy came in with greater frequency, and from what I could gather from my voice-pipe, there was a hope that we might be in at the death, and even fire a shot or two.

At four o'clock the ship's company went to action stations, as a preparation for any circumstances. The offi-

cer of the watch then kindly informed me that some enemy vessels had been sighted, adding that we were to keep a sharp look-out for submarines and *not* to scan the horizon for the enemy. I am afraid that our success in overcoming that weakness was indifferent. We simply could not keep our eyes off the horizon, except to look at the signal-flags hoisted from time to time by the flagship as our speed was increased knot by knot. At 4.45 the signal was hoisted ordering us to prepare for immediate action.

About ten minutes later I observed a number of red flashes burst from one of our light cruisers on the horizon, and a cloud of brown cordite smoke rose from her. This burst was followed by more from other ships near her. It was with difficulty that I realised that they were firing at a genuine enemy ship with an intent to kill, and not at an inoffensive target for practice. I remember that I said to myself at the time, "Now you have seen your first shot fired in anger." Nevertheless it was unrealistic. It is this sense of unrealism which is the most surprising sensation in a modern action. Many of the practices are very realistic, and, after all, the noise made by a gun when firing for practice or in action is exactly the same.

The order then came for submarine look-outs to fall out and go to their action stations. I went to the conning-tower, where, as navigator's assistant or "tanky," I was stationed. My duty was to keep a record of all courses and changes of speed during the action, in order that our position could be found when all was over. I had also to put down such events as we observed, so that if we survived we could send in a report of the action. Shortly afterwards the captain and navigator came down from the bridge, as the enemy big ships were in sight. At one and a half minutes past five we opened fire with our 15-inch guns at the enemy battle cruisers at a range of a little over eleven miles.

Within a terribly short space of time we received our first taste of real war. A look-out on the starboard side of the conning-tower reported, "A large explosion in the battle-cruiser fleet."

"Note that down," said the Navigating Commander to me. I did so, feeling decidedly less heroic than some minutes before. The question which obtruded itself before my mind was, "Is that remark to be made about the *Penultimate* before the day is over?" Looking out of the slit in the side of the conning-tower, I saw a heavy black cloud hovering over the rear of the battle cruisers. There was also a gap, which had previously been filled by H.M.S. *Indefatigable*. With her had perished four midshipmen who, six months before, had been cadets in the same term as I.

We were having a very comfortable time. We were firing

steadily at a long range, and were receiving no return fire. The enemy battle cruisers, who when first sighted were steering an opposite course to us, had now turned, and were running away at full speed. Whilst running, their fire seemed to be directed entirely at the battle cruisers. They were firing with great skill and with a certain amount of luck. It is the practice of the Germans to bunch all the shots of a salvo or broadside into a small space. Thus, if they score a hit, probably three or four projectiles will land on board the target. The disadvantage of this scheme is that, if they miss, they will probably miss clean, whereas with a somewhat larger "spread" of a salvo of shell falling near possibly one or two would hit. During this opening stage their battle cruisers scored several hits, for H.M.S. *Queen Mary* sank shortly afterwards, with the loss of all but a dozen lives.

Shortly after this, some of the enemy turned their attention to us, and, after ranging salvos, began dropping shells all round, and scoring occasional hits, though of no very serious nature. The *Penultimate* was hit on the armour without causing serious damage, and in the ship ahead we could see gaping holes in two of her boats.

It was at this time that the main High Sea Battle Fleet appeared on the scene and opened a heavy fire on the battle cruisers. They accordingly turned back and passed about a mile away from us, going full speed in the opposite direction. They looked a magnificent sight. We turned to follow them, and in turning came under a very heavy fire. It was estimated that we were then fighting at odds of four or five to one, as the battle cruisers were rapidly drawing out of range. The sea became a continuous succession of waterspouts, both ahead, astern, and on the sides of us. The hits were marvellously few. Throughout this ordeal we continued steadily firing. Spotting the fall of our shot was a difficult matter, due to the glare of the sun, which was exactly in our eyes. The air, also, was misty, which tended to make against clarity. However, our fire was not without serious effect. Without the actual satisfaction of seeing a ship sink, we gave them a very serious hammering, without suffering much inconvenience ourselves. From the *Penultimate's* conning-tower we saw three salvoes fall dead on our fore-and-aft line produced, ten yards ahead of the ship. It gave us a feeling impossible to describe, but supposed to exist in the pit of the stomach, for with each salvo we could almost feel the little "left" correction which the German gun-control officer should be giving, and which would adjust the direction of the next salvo to drop in the conning-tower. Luckily for us that correction was given too late, for when the next salvo came it roared overhead and dropped into the water a hundred yards beyond us.

We were now racing away

to the northward, with every available ounce of steam driving the engines at their greatest speed. The highest trial speeds were well surpassed, as they always are on these occasions, and a very high speed was maintained for a long time. Thus we slowly drew away from the main enemy fleet, and even from their battle cruisers, who had turned to chase their late pursuers. Then the mist came down.

As one and all know, the mists were the cause of our failure to annihilate the enemy. It may seem that, at this point, the mist provided us with a providential means of escape. This was not the case. We were drawing away from the Germans to a range where our big guns have a tremendous advantage. The German guns are designed for North Sea use only, and for just such a day as that. They are only able to fire at comparatively short ranges, and are wonderfully accurate at these ranges. Our guns are designed for much greater ranges, for our ships may be called upon to fight in any part of the world. Thus the greater range within limits meant added advantage to us. The mist ruined everything.

Firing temporarily ceased, and every one took a breath. We junior people, who did not know the position of the main part of the Grand Fleet, took a look round. At the same time, conforming with the battle cruisers, we altered course towards the enemy, and waited for a sight of him to reopen fire. We heard the battle cruisers begin a heavy firing ahead, and then, in a rift in the mist, we sighted the Hun once again. The light was far better, and we picked up his range quickly. He did not appear as comfortable, and his replies were not very dangerous. Once again, down came the mist.

Ahead the firing still continued, and, a few minutes later, increased in volume. This must have been the time when the *Invincible* and her sisters came into the fight, and the *Invincible* met her end in a similar manner to the *Queen Mary*. It was terribly sudden. One moment she was a fine ship steaming some thirty miles an hour, the next moment there was not a sign of her.

Suddenly the mist cleared, and we saw the Germans at a comparatively close range. It was something in the nature of a sudden shock, and, to such of us as had never seen a Hun, it was a most interesting experience to see one close to us. They could not have been more than five miles distant, when I caught sight of one squadron, four of the *König* class. My view of the situation was much limited, as we were packed like sardines into the conning-tower, so that movement was almost impossible, and also I had my job to attend to.

We wasted no time in gazing, but reopened fire with vigour. The enemy replied in full earnest, and we were subjected to the worst ordeal of the day. The sea literally boiled with

the water-spouts caused by falling shell. The entire German fleet appeared to concentrate on our squadron, and every ounce of Teutonic hate was directed at our extermination. Their success was not great. They scored a few hits of minor importance to some of us. They never hit the *Penultimate* at all, though they persistently dropped them as close as fifty yards each side. In one case the ricochets, in the other case the first flights of the shell, shrieked overhead in an alarming manner; but noise does no damage. Eventually one of our number was forced to leave the line, due to a jam in her steering gear, and when out of control passed close to the German ships. To their everlasting dishonour may it be said that they failed to sink her, and she was easily able to reach port under her own steam. By all rights, she should have been sunk within a few minutes. Presumably that is the reason why the German Admiralty persistently claimed her destruction.

At the height of this shell-storm came our deliverance. On the port bow we suddenly sighted the Grand Fleet, distant about five miles, preceded by armoured cruisers. In the log this fact is merely noted by the entry—

"7.7. Sighted Grand Fleet on port bow."

There can be no representation of the feeling of relief which that sight afforded. We had so far fought against ever-increasing odds, and were at the moment in the thick of the worst bombardment, whilst none of us junior people knew when the battle fleet might be expected. Looking back on the action, and helped by the official report, the chief feeling is one of admiration for this wonderful strategy by which the enemy was unsuspectingly drawn into a trap, from which, with reasonable visibility and luck, he could never have escaped. The daring and skill with which this operation was carried out by our leaders is the brightest spot in the action. It is a terrible misfortune that, having so carefully prepared the ground, we were unable to extract any more tangible results than his immediate retreat to his base, with losses, and his subsequent inactivity. However, at that time our minds were filled with but one thought—"Thank God."

Whilst the fleet began to deploy the cruisers swept on, and came between us and the enemy. In so doing, they came under a murderous fire, at first receiving the shots which were aimed at us, but were falling short—and later, when the Huns became panic-stricken or overjoyed at an easy fight, the whole of the fire. This action was possibly the most gallant of the engagement. The smoke made by these cruisers hid not only our squadron, which stood in the way of being sunk within a short space of time, but the deployment of the whole fleet. However, this magnificent action cost us two ships. H.M.S. *Defence* caught fire,

forward and aft, almost simultaneously, and after a very short while blew up. We saw the whole terrible scene as she sank about half a mile from us. There were first the two flames with clouds of smoke, then one tremendous flame, and then absolutely nothing. As well as this, the *Warrior* was disabled, and drifted past us out of the fight. Her subsequent career is well known. When the cruisers withdrew to the flank, the battle fleet was deployed in line of battle, and very ready to do its work.

I think that this moment must have been one of the greatest anti-climaxes of history. The Germans, up till that minute, must have felt jubilant. I do not honestly think that they expected the arrival of the battle fleet for several hours. Put yourself in the place of the Germans, and, assuming that, what was the prospect? The odds were in their favour by a matter of four to one; the result could not be in doubt. It must only be a matter of time until the British were sunk. Half an hour should see them crippled, in an hour they would have ceased to exist. Then all that remained was to avoid contact with the main British fleet and return to base, having struck a blow which would shake Britain's prestige more than ever before. The appearance of the cruisers caused a sudden flutter. Could this mean reinforcements? No; such ships would not be sent into action ahead of the fleet. This must be a vain attempt to save one or two of the heavy ships at the expense of a cruiser. Never mind, this action would merely serve to increase the bag! They must have rubbed their hands.

Then the smoke cleared away, and revealed the British fleet—miles of it. The spectacle of seven or more miles of ships, at fairly close range, and all fresh to the fight, must have stricken terror into the heart of many a superman. Within the space of a few minutes the tables had been absolutely turned. Now it was to become a fight for life on the part of the late pursuers.

As soon as the smoke cleared our fleet opened fire. At such short range very little time was lost in "finding the target." Hits were scored almost from the start. The effect on the Hun was most marked. He seemed completely unable to cope with the situation. From accurate and steady fire he changed to wild and irregular shooting within a few minutes. With the strain relaxed, we watched with interest the splashes of shells falling a mile or more from their intended target. So ineffectual was their fire that they only scored one small hit on the battle fleet. Within ten minutes three ships near the head of their line of battle ships were burning brightly. In other ships hits could also be seen in the form of fires.

Our squadron was temporarily out of the fight, for, in taking up our position in the line, we were forced to alter

course out of range. Thus, when we once more took up the tale, it was against a much-battered foe, and the fire which we gave merely added to his confusion.

Thus the Hun realised that, after all, Der Tag had not yet come. In fact, at this juncture, the Kiel Canal was distinctly preferable to the mastery of the seas. Whether they won or not, the laurel wreaths were prepared, and the Kaiser's speech was written. It seemed a pity if nobody reaped the benefit. At any rate it was obvious that anything was preferable to the present state of affairs. Accordingly the main fleet was turned away, and the destroyers were sent to cover the turn by a torpedo attack.

Of that torpedo attack little need be said. We saw eight large destroyers approaching us. The order was passed to our secondary armament, and they opened fire. As far as we could see, not a torpedo was fired; at least not one torpedo passed near us. Three of those eight destroyers were crippled by us and finished off by our light cruisers and destroyers. The remainder were last seen steaming away at full speed.

However, we were unable to follow the enemy with any prospect of success. Dark was coming down, and the mist was too thick for any more effective action. Thus the Commander-in-Chief manœuvred us so that we were placed between the Hun and his base, and so that the next morning we might resume the argument. Then dark came down.

As soon as the actual fighting was finished, the captain and navigator left the conning-tower for the bridge, where a clearer view could be obtained. The staff, of course, followed. We then began to relax after a strenuous day, and felt extremely cold. We had had no food since lunch, and I had no warm clothing with me. However, there was no possibility of leaving the bridge, so there was nothing to be done but wait. Our only food that night was a few sandwiches, produced from heaven knows where.

The night was almost more exciting than the day. With the continuance of the mist it was very dark. As a result, it was impossible to tell when we might run into the enemy fleet. We might pass within half a mile of each other without knowing it. Also, the enemy might try a destroyer attack, if they could locate us. Destroyer attacks on a dark night are the most fiendish things possible. In addition, the destroyers have the advantage over big ships, as, whilst invisible themselves, they can see the black shapes of the big ships looming up in the dark.

Our small craft were the easy winners of the night operations. They clung to the enemy fleet throughout the early part of the night, harrassing them with attacks whenever possible. As well as this, chance meetings were very frequent. An odd de-

stroyer, or possibly two or three, would suddenly find themselves in the middle of a German squadron. In every case there was no second thought about the matter. They went straight in, enduring any fire, in order to fire their torpedoes. To be a Hun must have been a nerve-racking thing.

These affairs were half-hourly throughout the first half of the night, and, when viewed from our standpoint, were a weird and wonderful sight. All of a sudden the darkness would be interrupted by a glare of light, as a searchlight was switched on. The light might be five or ten miles away, but its glare lighted the whole area dimly. Then would come the rattle and booming of guns fired at a great speed, with red flashes stabbing the darkness. For about five minutes this would continue. Frequently there would be an explosion as some ship met her doom. The sky would become lighted with the flickering of fires started aboard some of the engaged ships. Suddenly, as though by a prearranged signal, the firing would cease, the searchlights go out, and peace and darkness reign once more. The worst of these affairs which we noted occurred shortly after midnight, when the termination came in a large explosion which lighted up the sky brightly for miles. Some big ship must have left this world at that time.

By midnight we were becoming very tired. I found another midshipman who had managed an hour's sleep at his station, who relieved me of my duties on the bridge. I was told that I might go to the conning-tower for a short while, and after borrowing some warm clothes I went there to look for a corner to sleep in. There was not an inch of the deck available; the crew off watch were occupying the whole space. All that I could find was a voice-pipe which made a horizontal bend, and on this I sat down. Within ten seconds I was asleep.

This period "off" was no lengthy one, for after half an hour I was sent for to return to the bridge, as my relief was required again. However, after an hour, I had another spell off for an hour; and later, when once more relieved, I squeezed into a corner and slept soundly for one and a half hours, propped up against the steel wall of the conning-tower. Thus I was very lucky. The captain and navigator never left the bridge for one second during the whole of the night.

At dawn we were all much on the *qui vive*. It was thought quite probable that we should find ourselves in the middle of the enemy fleet. As it was, we merely found ourselves in a thick haze, with a maximum visibility of less than one mile. Under these conditions it was impossible to keep touch with him. It was a terrible disappointment to us all. A meeting then would have meant a decisive victory. In clear weather he would probably have been in sight.

We continued to stand to the southward until the mined area was reached, when we turned back and swept to the northward in the hopes of catching some if not all of them. However, our luck was out.

About 7 A.M., when danger of an immediate action was lessened, our thoughts returned to the aching void which took the place of our stomachs. Heroic cooks left their stations and lighted the galley fire. In sections, the ship's company went to breakfast.

I was not in the first batch, and was much interested to hear reports as to how we had fared aft. The first account was from a lieutenant. "Oh," he said, "the chief damage is in the gun-room. A proj. has completely wrecked the place, and it is three inches deep in beer." The whole story was somewhat exaggerated. The mess was an absolute wreck through the effects of our own gun-fire, and not one piece of crockery remained. We messed in the wardroom for some days.

About 8 A.M. I had my first meal for twenty hours. Every one present was busily talking and relating his experiences. This in the intervals of ravenous feeding. From the others I gathered that the enemy had not harmed us. Our sole casualty was a gentleman who dropped a shell on his toe whilst attempting to load. Of course there were numerous close shaves. There was the midshipman in the fore-top who lost his cap, and subsequently found it, with a piece of iron inside, on the upper deck. I am afraid that suspicion with regard to the "shrapnel bullet" rests on a kindly old chief stoker who was in charge of a fire party.

At about noon, after much fruitless sweeping, we heard that the enemy had slipped past us in the mist and had regained his harbour. Much sickened, we were forced to return. The next day we got in and started to replenish. For the remainder of that day and for the whole of the following night we were replenishing with ammunition and fuel. By the morning after we were ready for sea once more.

The whole fight was one long series of disappointments, and possibly the greatest disappointment of all was the reception on our return, as a result of gloomy communiqués. That matter has long since been set right, and now every person knows that the Jutland action was, though indecisive, as judged by tangible results, an expression of the sea power of the Allies, and their ability to drive back intruders.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE CONFERENCE OF PARIS—THE TRAGI-COMEDY OF PRINKIPO—MR WILSON'S INDISCRETION—THE NEW CRUSADERS—THE MANDATORY PRINCIPLE—THE EXAMPLES OF EGYPT AND SAMOA—DE COMMINES ON THE MEETING OF PRINCES—THE ASPERSIONS CAST UPON THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA—WHAT THE CONGRESS ACTUALLY ACHIEVED—THE GREAT PART PLAYED BY ENGLAND—CASTLEREAGH, HERO AND STATESMAN.

THE Conference of Peace, now being held in Paris, is said by the friends of the people to be "democratic." Though in its ultimate purpose it seems not to differ from other Conferences, it assuredly engrosses in its method of procedure all the vices of democracy. It is garrulous, sentimental, and irresolute. It prefers words to deeds, and its representatives (or some of them) keep their eyes, where those eyes love best to linger, upon the ballot-box. "Le Congrès ne marche pas," said the Prince de Ligne at Vienna a hundred years ago, "il danse." The present Conference chatters rather than dances, although the thousand and one typists who throng Paris have been given a ball-dress apiece by a paternal (or maternal) Government. And this chattering is something worse than a waste of time. It almost makes us despair of a reasonable settlement. Europe longs for peace, and she is given dissertations. The men chosen to restore a battered world cannot put off the baneful habit of rhetoric. They deliver showy orations, and appear to think that the same kind of eloquence as serves the demagogue will serve also the diplomatist.

Let us take as a flagrant example of political levity the tragi-comedy of Prinkipo. The very name savours of *opera bouffe*, and should have been a warning, even to the foolish. Who was responsible for it we do not know; we do know that it reflects very little credit upon any one concerned. The disgrace (or the glory) of devising it, we are told, must be shared. The plan, it is said, was inspired by Mr Lloyd George, drafted by Mr Wilson, and adopted by the Conference. This threefold division of labour reminds us of the famous Canadian report which, said rumour, was thought by Wakefield, written by Charles Buller, and signed by Lord Durham. The Canadian report led on to a stable government; the adventure of Prinkipo would have ended in ridicule, if it had not aroused a vast deal of ill-feeling.

The suggestion that the Bolsheviks should meet representatives of the other Russian Governments, as well as of the Allies, upon an island in the Sea of Marmora, might have

been made in a madhouse. The scoundrels Lenin and Trotsky, and the gang of blood-thirsty Jews which follows them, are the declared enemies of the human race. No decent man should speak to them. To confer with them politely and on equal terms would be a defilement. Especially was it an open insult to gentlemen like MM. Sazonoff and Savinkoff, to be invited to sit in the same room with miscreants who had slaughtered their friends and robbed their houses. Yet Mr Wilson and Mr Lloyd George did not take the trouble to ask the representatives of Omsk, Ekaterinodar, and Ukraine, who were in Paris, what they thought of their plan. They made up their minds like tyrants, and awaited the result in self-satisfied confidence. As a necessary and proper consequence, they received a rebuff which will not enhance the authority of the Conference. MM. Sazonoff and Savinkoff curtly refused to go; the Bolshevik assassins were left in the attitude of spoiled beauties who had been wooed by the Conference, and wooed in vain; and there for the present is an end of it. What were the motives which led Mr Wilson and Mr George to embark in a cock-boat upon the Sea of Marmora? It is difficult to discover. Whatever Mr Wilson says or does is ascribed to a lofty idealism; but we love not the idealist, who makes difficulties for his Allies, in order to strengthen the enemy whom he was reluctant to fight. Mr George, on the other hand, never ceases to play the political game, and perhaps he thought he might conciliate the ineffable Mr Lansbury, the effete Mr Henderson, and his friend Mr Ramsay Macdonald, by thus encouraging the Russian Bolsheviks. But he has weakened whatever influence he might have exercised upon the Conference by his reckless levity; he has annoyed the French; and he has been properly snubbed even by the murderers themselves, Lenin and Trotsky. The ill-omened episode has done more than this: it has given the world a foretaste of the anger and ill-will which the precious League of Nations, if ever it come into being, will certainly arouse in all those of its members who value their sovereignty and independence.

Of the second indiscretion, Mr Wilson must plead guilty alone. The speech which he delivered upon his hobby, the League of Nations, was received in complete silence. It might have sounded well enough in a provincial debating society. Chatauqua would have rejoiced in it. It was wholly out of place at a Conference of Peace. It shone with the glittering commonplaces so dear to Mr Wilson's countrymen, but it was light without heat, and when the poor little candle was put out nothing at all was left of it. The most that he said had no relevance to the matter in hand. With tears in his voice he explained

that the strain of the war had been borne by old men, women, and children, who bade us make peace secure for them. That is what we all want to do, not merely for women and children, but for the sake of the soldiers who have fought and died for our cause. He declared that if we do not make the League vital, we shall disappoint the expectations of the peoples. Neither his elections nor our own give him the smallest jot of support. Again, he tells us that "if he returns to the United States without having made every effort in his power to realise this programme, he should return to meet the merited scorn of his fellow-citizens." That may be true, but it is an argument which does not touch France nor England. We have no interest whatever in Mr Wilson's desire to win the next election for his party. France and England are the neighbours of Germany; they have borne the brunt of the fighting; they have endured the heaviest sacrifices; and they are not yet responsible for their deeds and their policies to the citizens of the United States.

And then Mr Wilson makes a claim for himself and his countrymen, which cannot for one moment be supported. "We stand in a peculiar case," says he. "As I go about the streets here I see everywhere the American uniform. These men came into the war after we had uttered our purposes. They came as crusaders, not merely to win a war, but to win a cause." Now, if these words mean anything, they mean that, while the Americans are crusaders, the French and English are not. Such a statement cannot be passed without a challenge. We also —the French and the English — were crusaders from the first days of August 1914. We gave of our best without stint and without repining. We lost far more men in the first few months of the war than the Americans have lost altogether. We fought to win the war, because we did not know, and do not know, any other way of winning a cause except by winning a war. Moreover, if the Americans are "crusaders," they kept their hope of a crusade a profound secret for three profitable years; and they understood well enough, when they did join the Allies in 1917, that the victory of Germany would imperil their prosperity, even their existence. However, Mr Wilson, clad always in the robes of the sentimentalist, believes that his motives are purer than the motives of other men. He believes also that the fountains of the enthusiasm for the League "spring from all the ancient wrongs and sympathies of mankind, and the very pulse of the world seems to beat to the surface in this enterprise." Of these wrongs we have in Europe borne a far heavier share than has fallen to America's lot, and we are convinced that a hard peace is more likely to give us the security and in-

demnity which we demand, than a thousand pages of coloured rhetoric. Indeed, as we read Mr Wilson's speech, we remembered George Ade's fable of the pompous "spell-binder" who, "with his right hand inside of his Prince Albert coat," prated of "the Everglades of Florida," and was bidden by a discerning spouse "to let go of the flying rings and get back to the green earth."

And that is what the members of the Peace Conference will not do. They will not get back to the green earth. Peace must be made, and it matters not to them. So strong upon them is the habit of popular assemblies, that they cannot help making speeches and boasting about their ideals. They profess a vast contempt for the great men who a hundred years ago settled the peace of Europe. They despise the arts of diplomacy, thinking that politics will serve them a better turn; and they prove daily to the world that without the arts of diplomacy they are powerless to affect anything, even agreement among themselves.

If they are guided by any principle, that principle seems to be, that France and England, who have fought the fight, shall not profit by their victory; that Germany, who has outdone all the barbarity recorded in history, shall be hurt as little as possible in her pride or in her pocket. Nothing, for instance, can be more bitterly insulting to the just confidence of France and England in their right to govern than the "mandatory principle," which is to be applied to the colonies wrested from Germany. For some centuries we have borne "the white man's burden" without disgrace. We have done our best to make subject races happy, and we have succeeded. We have ruled our colonies, not in the hope of gain, but with the unchanging resolve to govern well. And now we are told that we must hold the German colonies under the League of Nations. This principle is good neither for governors nor governed. All sound sovereignty is in the nature of a superstition. The King of England has been a symbol of justice and peace to many thousands who never saw him. The benefits which he represents have been cherished the more warmly, because they were known to emanate from him. Do the politicians, who in their bungling way are attempting to reconstruct the world, remember the universal and passionate grief evoked all over the British Empire by the death of Victoria, the Great White Queen? Who in Africa or in the South Seas will understand the ministrations of the League, if it ever exists, or shed a tear if a Zeppelin remove with a single bomb all its sad uninspired bureaucrats?

A flag and a chief of state, then, are necessary for the proper governance of colonies. If the League ever have a flag, it will be a thing to laugh at;

if it ever have a chief, it will be the man with the glib tongue and a deft habit of intrigue. To these things no native race, wise in its childhood, will ever pay respect. And if "the mandatory principle" take away from the governed the happy illusion which ensures peace, it makes the task of the governor impossible. We have seen the system of dual control at work before this. There was a time when Egypt had a divided government, and was so closely hampered thereby that for her growth was impossible. And then the sole duty of government came to England, and Egypt increased marvellously in prosperity, nor has the passage of years put any check upon that increase. In Samoa also we have seen the mandate at work, to the complete extinction of justice and happiness. Here are our warnings, and we refuse to take them. In order that England and France may be thought not to profit by the war, many thousands of honest helpless natives shall be condemned to live without the personal government, which alone they can understand, which alone can bring them happiness. You might just as well convert them into limited liability companies, and govern them by a board of polyglot directors.

The one chance of the mandatory principle is that which it shares with the League of Nations: that it will become a dead letter. But if that be the hope of our representatives, then our representatives are playing the part of plotters, not of men. Surely it is not easy to understand the passion cherished by demagogues for committees, offices, pens, agenda-papers, and frock-coats. Perhaps these are so many implements for shelving responsibility. But what will our Dominions oversea think of the sorry expedient which we are adopting to save the Conference the trouble of making up its mind? The Dominions did not wait for the opportune moment in which to come into the war. They were at our side as soon as war was declared, and they have fought gallantly on many a field. Are we to assume, then, that they are fit to fight, and not fit to undertake the duties of government, which before the war were discharged by the Germans? Are we to put them under the tutelage of a League, in which Liberia may have the casting vote? If they are high-spirited, as we know they are, they will not accept the thankless trust, and will leave it to the League to take on the work, for which it will most certainly be proved unfit.

The greatest mistake which the Conference made was to invite the attendance of President Wilson. That wise man, Philippe de Commines, thought that "two princes who desire to continue in friendship ought never to come together, but to employ virtuous and wise men between them, who will

increase their unity." It was only in youth that he would allow his princes to share their pleasures—and, alas, in 1917 the Kaiser and Mr Wilson were too old to enjoy a harmless game of golf together. Commines was, of course, in the right of it, and if Woodrow I. had not crossed the ocean, it would have been better both for America and for Europe. In Paris Mr Wilson stands not on the same foot as the others. He is the chief of a state; they are but delegates. Whether he wishes it or not, he carries more weight than should belong to him. The informal talk that goes on, without doubt, between this representative and that, cannot be equal where he is one of the interlocutors. King George is not in Paris. President Poincaré very properly holds his tongue, leaving it to his Ministers to watch over the interests of France. Why, then, should Mr Wilson not be content to leave such work as the United States are called upon to do in the Conference to Messrs Lansing and House? He has, by his interference, set the whole business out of gear. He would be more than mortal if he deserved all the praise that has been heaped upon him in the last few weeks. He would be more than mortal also if he had not succumbed to it. But we want to get on with the peace, even though we do obeisance to no chief of state. And we cannot but be pleased that Mr Wilson has returned to America, a President killed by kindness. We can only hope that the urgent call of his countrymen will keep him for ever on the other side of the Atlantic.

As we have said, the Pharisees, who are now voluble in Paris, hold up their hands in thankfulness that they are not as those who met at Vienna a hundred years ago. The Radicals, from whose faces the smile of superiority is not removed even while they sleep, hold their sides in merriment when they think of Vienna. One of the gentlemen who write for the Cocoa Press, announced not long since that he found Castlereagh "laughable." He would, poor fellow! Moreover Mr Wilson gave these gentry a lead, which they followed with zest. He confided in the ear of an ingenuous "interviewer" that the Congress of Vienna was misled by "political bosses," and that the Conference of Paris should not suffer the like fate. Castlereagh and Wellington political bosses! Was there ever such a confusion of thought? Wellington was a man in authority, and knew it. Castlereagh never in his life was seduced by politics from what he thought was the road of justice. And Mr Wilson and Mr Lloyd George—what, indeed, are they but political bosses, well-versed in all the tricks of the ballot-box, better skilled than any of their predecessors in the dangerous intrigues of the hustings.

Even if they possessed one tenth part of Castlereagh's knowledge and resolution, they could not profit by it. For they pretend a blind faith in the guidance of "the plain man," and are very sensitive to the temperature of the voter as he blows hot or cold upon them.

The deriders of the Congress of Vienna, according to the custom of Radicals, are bemused with phrases. Here, for instance, is Professor C. K. Webster, whose pamphlet on the Congress of Vienna bears the *imprimatur* of the Foreign Office, solemnly declaring that the statesmen who made peace a hundred years ago did nothing "to win the gratitude of posterity," except in "one or two minor points." If this were so, then was posterity very hard to please. And we prefer to Professor Webster's Whiggishness the reasoned judgment of the late Lord Salisbury, than whom none had a better right to speak of foreign affairs. "For forty years the peace of Europe flourished undisturbed," thus he wrote in 1862, "by one single conflict between any of the five great Powers who adjusted their differences at Vienna. . . . As far as international relations are concerned, there has been no rupture in Europe important enough to have been dignified by historians with the name of war. Europe has not enjoyed so long a repose from the curse of war since the fall of the Roman Empire. Such an achievement is an ample justification of the acts of the Congress of Vienna and of the Minister [Castlereagh] who bore so large a part in shaping its decrees." Indeed it is; but Professor Webster looks upon the past with the eyes of the present; the new catch-words echo in his ear as he writes, and, like many another, he thinks it better to be sentimental than to be just. But why, we wonder, does the Foreign Office, which knows, or should know, the truth, give its sanction to these heresies?

Professor Webster is kind enough to confess that the Congress was not without a principle. To be sure it was not, and the principle was that of peace and security. And then he complains that the Congress discouraged the idea of self-government. In this discouragement the Congress was perfectly right. The statesmen of 1814 had seen enough of what is called Bolshevism to-day, in the deplorable revolution which had devastated France, to keep it in the ancient ways. It was not turned aside from its duty by the odious cant of democracy, which has now upset all our decent standards of right and wrong. Its members saw clearly enough that resolute government was necessary to restore the happiness and prosperity of Europe, nor would they endanger a hardly-won peace for the vain pleasure of repeating proverb. But when Alexander I., who played

the same part in 1814 as is essayed now by Mr Wilson, attempted to establish the Holy Alliance, the forerunner of the League of Nations, our own Castlereagh, whose foresight detected the danger of this sentimental tyranny, refused to give it more than an ironical approval. "The benign principles of the Alliance," said Castlereagh, "may be considered as constituting the European system in the matter of political conscience. It would, however, be derogatory to this solemn act of the governments to mix its discussion with the ordinary diplomatic obligations which bind State to State, and which are to be looked for alone in the treaties which have been concluded in the accustomed form." Thus, as a wise historian has said, "the soul of the Holy Alliance might be supposed to hover over the councils of Europe; but in these councils the treaties, and the treaties alone, were to be the determining factors." And to-day our only hope of a permanent peace is that the soul of the League of Nations should be suffered to "hover" and no more. If we wish not to be plunged back into war, we must ensure the concert of the Allies, who have beaten Germany to the ground, and leave the adulation and the management of the League to the fanatical pedants who take delight in debating societies.

And Professor Webster becomes a humourist when he gravely declares that "the failure of the Congress of Vienna to give any adequate expression to the nobler ideals of universal peace may perhaps be condoned." We should think the failure might be condoned! Universal peace was then, and still remains, an idle dream. What the Congress achieved was to give to Europe an actual definite peace, which lasted longer than any peace known to our modern history. Is it not nonsense, then, to talk of "condonation," and to pretend to blame the statesmen of a hundred years ago for not sitting at the feet of Messrs Henderson and Ramsay Macdonald? What we ask to-day is precisely the same thing which our grandfathers asked in 1814, and we shall account ourselves fortunate if our representatives in Paris serve us half as well as we were served by Castlereagh and Wellington, heroes who knew what they wanted and how to get it, and who were all the wiser because they would not permit words and phrases to take precedence of deeds and guarantees.

And then we are confronted by the foolish persons who shudder at "the balance of power." They know not what it means, and find it a convenient bogey wherewith to frighten the ignorant elector. When M. Clemenceau, who is an honest realist, said that he would be content with the balance of power as a means to preserve the peace of Europe, he was assailed as bitterly as he might have

been had he uttered an impropriety. Yet our best chance of a lasting peace is to preserve the balance of power with a loyal fidelity. The great war which has devastated Europe came not from the balance of power, but from its neglect. Drunk with fiery spirit of politics, England and France permitted their power to be overbalanced by the might of Germany, and the result might have been the universal extinction of justice and liberty. What, then, is the meaning of the balance of power? It is this, in the words of an international lawyer: "That any European State may be restrained from pursuing plans of acquisition, or from making preparations looking towards future acquisitions, which are judged to be hazardous to the independence and national existence of its neighbours." Such is the system which has made Europe habitable for many centuries, and which is a far stronger guarantee of peace than the fantastic thing to which Mr Wilson, without knowing what he meant by it, has given a name, and into which our representatives are vainly trying to put the breath of life.

When we turn from the aspersions cast by the Whigs upon the Congress of Vienna to the achievements of the statesmen gathered together there, we cannot but be amazed at the contrast. The task set to the representatives of the Powers was not light. Europe had been at war for a quarter of a century. All the old landmarks were effaced; all the old standards of life were abolished. The Congress, therefore, was asked to secure the world against a recurrence of the war, and to distribute among those competent to rule them the territories which had been conquered by France and her military dictator. The achievement of these ends was not rendered less difficult by the conflicting claims of the Allies, and by certain promises which had been given in moments of stress by reckless, unknowing Ministers. In other words, the Congress was asked not only to provide security for the future, but to fulfil the pledges of the past.

Moreover, the Congress of Vienna was disturbed by the presence of a Chief of State, whose high moral altitude obscured a definite and a selfish purpose. Alexander I. was the "idealist" of the moment. He spoke of Holy Alliances and universal peace, and he kept his eye resolutely fixed upon Poland. He aspired to make the world perpetually safe for autocracy; he was determined that the world, if he had his way, should be dominated by Russia. He carried more weight than he should, because, though a Chief of State, he conferred with the representatives of other States, and thus wielded an influence greater than his wisdom or his cause deserved. The result was that, before the statesmen assembled at Vienna could arrive at a definite agreement, they were obliged per-

force to conciliate Alexander I., who, not content with expressing his own idealism, gave expression also to the idealisms of Mme. de Krüdener, Adam Czartoriski, and La Harpe.

But above all he was resolved, if he could, to force the Powers to receive as a gospel his "diplomatic apocalypse." He proclaimed aloud, with the voice of a prophet, that henceforth he and his brother monarchs of Austria and Prussia would govern their conduct by the principles of the Christian religion, and he invited the other rulers of Europe to follow the august and imperial example. Meanwhile he forgot not Poland, and after the manner of idealists he hoped that his practical egoism would be hidden in a cloud of noble sentiments. To the vague aspirations of Alexander, Castlereagh gave always a wise, ironic answer. He refused to commit himself or his country, and he succeeded admirably in lessening the effect of Alexander's fantasies. But he was hampered seriously in the discharge of the one duty, which he kept always before his eyes — the duty of making peace,—and he has been abused ever since by the Whigs, because he did not turn aside from the main business of the Congress and chatter nonsense about constitutional reform and the perfectibility of the human race. Professor Webster, in the pamphlet already cited, shows himself a victim of the prevailing superstition. "None," says he, "except Alexander — and he only fitfully and irresolutely — made any attempt to do more than the obvious." The obvious was to make peace, not to talk false philosophy, and the Congress of Vienna succeeded as it did mainly because Castlereagh and the best of his colleagues were content to do the obvious.

The Congress, then, which did nothing "to win the gratitude of posterity," as the historian tells us, except regulate the international rivers, gave Europe a lasting peace. This, of course, counts for nothing in the eyes of the sentimentalist. But after all it was the main purpose which it set out to achieve, and the Congress should have won the credit it deserved from all those who do not ask daily for a new heaven and a new earth, baptised in the blood of tyrants. The Congress restored to Europe a territorial system which, as the Master of Peterhouse has said, "had some doubtful points and some unmistakable defects, and for which permanency could not be hoped any more than any other set of human devices. But the system itself was neither accidental in its main principles, nor transitory in its main conditions. It re-established a real balance of power in Europe, if this expression be understood to mean that every security was provided against the violent disturbance of the peace of Europe by any *one* Power, or by any actually existing or pro-

bable combination of Powers." In other words, the Congress did precisely what it meant to do, and by the best and speediest method that statesmanship could devise. And if the Conference now being held in Paris succeeds half as well as the Congress of Vienna, it will earn the thanks of the whole world.

Where it failed was in admitting to its resolutions the merest taint of idealism. From Alexander's dream of a Holy Alliance came the fatal policy of intervention, which disturbed the tranquillity of Europe for many a day. If you would make the world safe for this system or that, if you would impose your will upon a reluctant neighbour, you must be prepared to exercise pressure. The pressure may be economic or it may be armed, but whatever form it assume it leads inevitably to hatred and ill-will. No free nation is happy when a gang of schoolmasters is set over it, as Europe found to its cost. All the failures in the settlement made at Vienna arose from foreign intervention in domestic quarrels. "There is no practice," said the late Lord Salisbury, "which the experience of nations more uniformly condemns, and none which governments more consistently pursue. Domestic discord is bad enough, but the passions which provoke it burn themselves out at last, and the contending parties are eventually schooled by each other into the moderation which alone makes the coexistence of freedom and order possible. But if foreign intervention on either side be once threatened, much more if it be carried out, a venom is infused into the conflict which no reaction weakens, and no revenge exhausts." That is perfectly true, and they who conferred at Vienna lived to see the perils which idealism brings upon a trusting world. Such was the worst inheritance of the Congress, and it was an inheritance which Lord Castlereagh always condemned. It is not necessary to have evil intentions to produce evil. When Russia, Austria, and Prussia, pursuing the aims of the Holy Alliance, met at Troppau, and established the principle that revolutionary attacks on monarchical government were a peril to the peace of Europe, when, further, they bade an Austrian army to replace the Bourbon King of Naples on the throne, they meant very well indeed. But they interfered in what was not their business, and left behind them a bitter memory of despotic insolence.

The nineteenth century then proved what harm might be done by political protectorates and inapposite interventions. Had it not been for these, the alliances formed at Vienna would not have been broken until the coming of Bismarck, and perhaps not then. And we of to-day, unwarned by the past, are treading the same road of danger. We are doing our best or our worst

to substitute for firm treaties, made by loyal and faithful friends, a League of Nations, which is but the Holy Alliance reversed. Lord Castlereagh was strong enough to thwart the will of Alexander I. Our representatives in Paris quail before that other autocrat, Mr Wilson, who is inspired by Alexander's dangerous idealism. And if history teaches us anything, it teaches us this plain lesson, that if you take away the sovereignty of individual states, if you destroy the responsibility of free governments, you will banish happiness and prosperity from the earth. The League of Nations will be capable of far more mischief than was the Holy Alliance, whose evil doings should be enough to make the most recklessly sentimental of our politicians pause ere he helps to forge this instrument of strife.

As we have said, it is to Castlereagh's eternal credit that he opposed the policy of interfering in other people's domestic affairs whenever he could. He was true always to the doctrine which he formulated himself: "Every state has an indisputable right to interfere with another, so as to defend itself; but such interference is just only when there is real manifest danger resulting from the circumstances of a particular case; such danger cannot, *a priori*, be the object of an alliance of cabinets." And the expression of this doctrine shows us not only what Castlereagh thought, —it shows us what he was. He was in politics a stern realist. He knew that revolution could not be stayed by the tenets of a sham philosophy, that glib catch-words would not stop the bullets of a resolute enemy. Whatever office he held, he did therein his country the greatest services. His indefatigable energy united Ireland with England, a piece of policy which was necessary to the safety of Ireland as of England. What he achieved in India, when he was at the Board of Control, was acclaimed by the Marquess of Wellesley himself. But England owes him her vastest debt of gratitude because he brought peace to her and to Europe, and saved her from the domination of the most dangerous tyrant, save one, that the modern world has seen.

For his pains he has been insulted and derided by all the Whigs who had command of pen and ink, and who have ever been busy in judging statesmen by false standards. "I met Murder on the way," wrote Shelley, "he had a mask like Castlereagh." Byron, far more scurrilous than Shelley, lost no opportunity of pouring contempt upon the saviour of Europe. When the poet heard of Waterloo, he said: "I am damned sorry for it. I didn't know but I might live to see Lord Castlereagh's head on a pole. But I suppose I shan't now." The men of letters, save Sir Walter Scott and one or two others, joined in the hue and cry. They

derided the speeches of Castlereagh, and charged him with the heinous crime of mixing his metaphors. They did not see that it should be accounted to him for virtue that he owed nothing to the specious gifts of oratory, and that if he mixed his metaphors his statesmanship was never confused. The truth is, he was neither wit nor scholar; he possessed no showy qualities; he was as little capable of flattering his audiences by making such speeches as they wanted to hear, as of voting for measures of which he disapproved, merely for the sake of weak complaisance or of panic fever. Consistent always, he spoke what was in his mind, plainly and clearly, and he never forgot that speech, even at its most eloquent, was subservient to action. Thus he seemed a monster incomprehensible to the witlings of his own time; thus he seems to the witlings of ours, who have come to an inheritance of strength and power through his exertions, a fair target for the shies of impertinence.

We owe to Castlereagh, who took up the work of Pitt, a full century of peace and happiness. In the Peninsula and in France he faced Napoleon and beat him. It was he who sent Sir Arthur Wellesley to Spain, and thus aided in the great work of driving the French over the Pyrenees. It was he who made the last Coalition, which ensured the downfall of the Corsican, and kept it harmoniously in being until the victory of Waterloo was won. It was he whose ascendancy at the Congress of Vienna made possible a permanent peace, and gave freedom to an enslaved Europe. When Thiers said that Castlereagh was "England herself in the camp of the Coalition," he went not an inch beyond the truth. As "England herself" he held in his hands the destiny of Europe. And he shared with Metternich as his greatest compliment the contempt of Talleyrand, who found Metternich "tortuous and second-rate," and who charged Castlereagh with "straining the Englishman's prerogative of ignorance." By these depreciations Talleyrand thought to exalt himself, and to display an aptitude for what to-day we call "propaganda."

But men are proved by their own deeds, not by what others say about them. And Castlereagh's fame is secure, even though he kept not ready upon his tongue the platitudes which the Radicals admire. When he came into office England was at war, and he left her at peace. That service alone is sufficient for immortality. His character, most often misunderstood, was simple in its greatness. He was a man of genius, even though his genius lay wholly in the realm of practical affairs, —a man of genius, who was never swayed by passion or imagination. He knew perfectly well the end at which he aimed, and he pursued it with an untired intensity. But, with the sedulous moderation which

always marked him, he did not shoot beyond his aim. This stern restraint has been well described by Lord Salisbury. "Nothing of that enthusiastic temper," he wrote, "which leads men to overhunt a beaten enemy, to drive a good cause to excess, to swear allegiance to a formula, or to pursue an impracticable ideal, ever threw its shadow upon Lord Castlereagh's serene, impassive intelligence." And it is for this impassive intelligence that our voluble demagogues have been pleased to condemn whatever Castlereagh did, while they have accepted gladly enough the freedom which he gave them.

He has been denounced as the foe of liberty and the friend of absolutism. And in truth he was neither. Shall we call him the foe of liberty, who freed an enslaved Europe from a tyrant? Shall we represent him as the friend of absolute government, who opposed, successfully for his own country, the despotism of the Holy Alliance? He had no sympathy with the chimera called Reform. He did not believe that all the ills to which flesh is heir could be cured by a lavish distribution of votes. Moreover, he was obstinately convinced that laws were made to be obeyed, and he would not weaken the strong hand of government for the noisy applause of pampered rebels. By way of punishment for daring to save his country, he was bitterly assailed, as we have said, by poets and philosophers. But, asked M. de Capefigue, "was England to be allowed to perish to please the poets?" There could be no doubt about the answer to this pertinent question. The poets and philosophers railed in vain, and Castlereagh had his way, which was the way of peace at home and abroad.

And what a contrast meets us to-day! Mr Lloyd George, who essays a task far heavier than Castlereagh's, deals chiefly in words. With Mr Wilson's aid he has set the rhetorical pace in Paris, and we are given speeches when we clamour for deeds. Castlereagh's mind was set upon what he knew to be right and practicable. In him knowledge and purpose were closely joined. Mr Lloyd George is a stranger wandering in a strange land, whose language and customs are beyond his understanding. Europe is to him a rolled-up map, and yet he is asked to help in the delimitation of new frontiers. What, then, can he do but fall back upon the eloquence which has won him the high position which he holds, and which is a grave danger to everybody else? When he returned to Westminster he found himself at home again, and spoke to his supporters like a man of valour. But the future of Europe is not to be decided in democratic assemblies; it is not an affair of nicely-balanced parties or cunning intrigue. And knowing full well that Mr Lloyd George's gifts, such

as they are, are not those required for the delicate operations of an international conference, we can feel no confidence in a happy issue out of our troubles. When we demand assurances that Germany never again shall menace the peace of Europe, that the Germans shall not be allowed to engage in any commerce until the factories which they destroyed in Belgium and in France are amply restored, that full indemnities should be paid to the nations dragged into the war against their will, we are told to be content with academic debates upon the fantasy called a League of Nations and the vain illusion of the mandatory system. Words! Words! Words! And we would give them all, including Mr Wilson's professional eloquence and Mr Lloyd George's "Celtic glamour," for one half hour of the great Lord Castlereagh's reasoned patriotism and high resolution.

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